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Labour and Socialist Movement in Bristol.

AN ACCOUNT OF THE
**Labour and Socialist
Movement in Bristol.**

Recorded by SAMSON BRYHER.



PART I.
(prior to 1888).

REPRINTED FROM AND PUBLISHED
BY THE

Bristol Labour Weekly.

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S. Bale

*to my old friend
& Comrade
E. C. Fairchild.*

335.1
B84a

FOREWORD.

BY THE EDITOR OF
"THE BRISTOL LABOUR WEEKLY."

IN response to many requests, it has been decided to preserve in permanent form the account of the Labour and Socialist Movement in Bristol, contributed by "S.B.," that has been appearing week by week in the "Bristol Labour Weekly."

Between these covers appears Part I, dealing with the period prior to 1888.

More contributions will appear each week in the "Bristol Labour Weekly," and in due course it is proposed to publish further parts in a similar form, which interested readers may eventually bind into a complete book.

The expense of producing this work, including the photographic blocks, has been very considerable, and it is not anticipated that any profit will accrue, but if there should be any it will all be devoted to the furtherance of the movement, to which the work is dedicated.

GORDON A. JAHANS.

Labon + Indles. Ref. 1 of Nov 16 1888

Part I (prior to 1888).

SOcialism, utopian and scientific, was conceived and born of the industrial changes of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The discovery of steam, the displacement of hand labour by machine production, and the rapid development of the Factory system, together with the trek of the dispossessed countryside workers to the towns, constituted a revolution. It caused much suffering to the working classes, and social relationships became fundamentally altered. Two new classes appeared in the state—the factory owners, who quickly became rich, and the factory “hands” to whom security of livelihood became precarious, with low wages, poverty, long hours of arduous toil and uncongenial conditions as constant companions.

Little imagination is needed to comprehend the feelings of the people who were thus forced from the countryside and home occupations to the dismal towns and the rule of the iron master, the machine and the mill. Neither the reason or necessity of it could they understand, much less how to deal with the situation. In their hearts, however, they rebelled, and to their sense of injustice gave much tangible expression. Mass protest meetings, demonstrations and processions were held, raids were made on factories and machinery broken up; ricks were fired, and in various other ways their discontent was made manifest, but it was blind, aimless and of no avail. The new system of production “dug itself in.”

A period of industrial depression set in at the close of the Napoleonic Wars (1815), and widespread unemployment was intensified by the demobilisation of large numbers of troops. Poverty, misery and wretchedness were appallingly abundant; and the cost of Poor Relief so heavy that apart from something having to be done, public spirited and humanitarian persons were impelled to give the condition of things serious consideration. With a view to

temporary alleviation of the position as well as permanent betterment, many ideas were put forward.

SUGGESTIONS FOR REFORM.

The chief of these were the proposals of Robt. Owen, who was already known far and wide as an educationalist, philanthropist, and model employer.

At a meeting of the “Association for the Relief of the Labouring Poor” he was requested to draft a report upon the provision of work for the unemployed. His proposal was to organise the unemployed into self-supporting communities to produce their own food and to supply their own needs, and, as far as circumstances would allow, these communities were to live independently of the ordinary market. Owen’s own conception of his “plan” soon expanded, and a few months later he was advocating it as a new system of society to supersede capitalism. He spent all his money and his life’s energy in popularising his ideas, and received considerable support.

In 1824 the London Co-operative Society was started for “... the formation of a community on the principles of mutual co-operation and the restoration of the whole produce of labour to the labourer ... and equality, both of labour and enjoyment.”

Owenite Co-operative Societies were formed in many centres (it was during discussion engendered in connection with them that the word “Socialism” was coined), but it cannot be said that they succeeded to any extent in replacing the capitalist system, which continued to grow, and the people’s unhappiness also increased, while the gulf between the employers and the workers widened and deepened.

THE CHARTISTS.

Jas. Morrison, in the *Pioneer* (1833) wrote: “The crisis of our condition is at hand. . . the question to be decided is, shall Labour or Capitalism be uppermost.”

The struggle of the working class took a new phase and expressed itself in the Chartist Movement, which clamoured for the People's Charter—

Manhood Suffrage.
Equal Electoral Districts.
Ballot Voting.
Annual Parliaments.
Abolition of Property Qualification for M.P.s; and
Payment of Members of Parliament.

Critics have often urged that this movement was purely political, and that granting its success, the economic plight of the workers would have been in no way bettered. Such remarks, however, are superficial.

The Chartists drew their main support from the famished industrial districts, and there is room for little doubt but what the "Charter" in the main was a manifesto of proletarian class-consciousness and regarded chiefly as a means of achieving far-reaching social reforms.

(Bronterre O'Brien, the first user of the term "Social-Democrat," 1839, urged national control of the currency and national ownership of the land.) Their petition to Parliament of 1842 which was backed by over three-and-a-quarter million signatures, was a vigorous statement of working class wrongs, and its meaning was clear to Macaulay, who, speaking against it in the House of Commons, asked "... what is the petition directed against... monopoly in land, in machinery, and in the means of transit. They find these to be the sources of the evils which must be stopped. What does that mean? ... Can it be anything but a sweeping confiscation of property which is contemplated?"

It is true that within the movement there were grave differences of opinion both as to the end and the means, but it produced many men of considerable ability, who did a wonderful work amid difficult circumstances—Feargus O'Connor, Harney, Sadler, Ernest Jones, Oastler, and Bronterre O'Brien, to name but a few, and it had a huge working class following.

Other factors, however, were at work that altered the course of events.

The repeal of the Corn Laws in 1846 brought cheap bread. At the same time there set in the big mid-

Victorian commercial and industrial expansion of trade. England boomed as the workshop of the world. As a class the workers ceased to be rebels. They accepted the capitalist basis of society and devoted their attention to ameliorations of the new order. Increasing the membership and influence of the Trade Unions, with ideals limited to improvement in wages, hours and conditions, comprised the main activities.

The factory, the machine, the town (with its soot and grime) and wage-slavery had triumphed over hand methods of production in the individual homes of the workers amid the more serene and greener surroundings of the countryside.

It is historically true, however, that no question is ever settled until it is settled right; "right," a word with a strong moral savour to it; and it was beyond the power of the new capitalist system, based on the doctrine of *laissez faire* to settle the condition of the people's problem "rightly."

An underworld of unemployed still remained, and as the forces of industrial development proceeded, it was inevitable that new crises would arise.

From the ashes of Chartism arose the Christian Socialists. In a word they claimed that so long as Christianity and Socialism kept apart each was helpless. Kingsley stated the view in an *Address to the Workmen of England* (1848). He wrote: "You think the Charter would make you free—would to God it would! The Charter is not bad, if the men who use it are not bad. . . Friends you want more than Acts of Parliament can give. . . there will be no true freedom without virtue, no true science without religion, no true industry without fear of God and love of your fellow citizens." He followed this up with a series of *Letters to the Chartists*, which were printed in a journal under the joint editorship of F. D. Maurice and J. M. Ludlow, called *Politics for the People*, and in 1850 published a weekly paper, the *Christian Socialist* which continued for a year. The Christian Socialists did very little in the world of politics, but rendered great service to the Co-operative Movement, and there is ample evidence of their influence permeating the literature of the time—Ruskin's works for example, whilst Kingsley

himself wielded great power as a novelist and propagandist.

These movements summarise, all too briefly, the period which Geo. Benson in his book *A History of English Socialism* (*New Leader*, 1/-) rightly calls "The Utopian period of the Socialist Movement."

THE BEGINNINGS OF SCIENTIFIC SOCIALISM.

When Socialism again became important, Benson continues, it was imbued with a fundamentally different spirit and outlook. "Socialism rested no longer upon a basis of abstract theoretical rights; it was placed in a historical setting and was for the first time related to reality." Socialism had become scientific. This immense change, he adds, was largely the work of Karl Marx.

Born at Trier in 1818, Marx was a man of great personality, giant intellect and universal attainments. He read practically every European language and wrote and spoke perfectly, English, French and German. Dr. Aveling writes, "His knowledge of the general literature of all countries was immense. As for Shakespeare he was 'the god of his idolatry'. . . he delighted in all forms of art. . . read deeply in all sciences, was thoroughly versed in the works of his contemporary Darwin, left note books crammed with notes on chemistry, turned for relaxation to mathematics. . . had a sense in which Darwin appears to have been deficient—that of humour"

But to return. Following a university education, he took his degree as Doctor of Philosophy in 1841, and commenced his journalistic career. On the staff of the *Rheinische Zeitung* he came into touch with French Utopian Socialism, and temporarily retired to obtain leisure for its study. Jenny Baronin von Westphaler, became his wife in 1843 and was his devoted helpmate through a long adventurous life, often accompanied by direst penury. Before the end of the year he removed to Paris where he met Heine, Proudhon, and Friedrich Engels. With the latter a life long friendship and literary partnership grew up.

Marx's stay in Paris was short. By order of the French Government he was expelled in 1845, and went to Brussels, but was presently expelled

from Belgium, and also Germany. As an exile he found asylum in London (1848) where he continued to live until his death (1883). He was buried in Highgate cemetery.

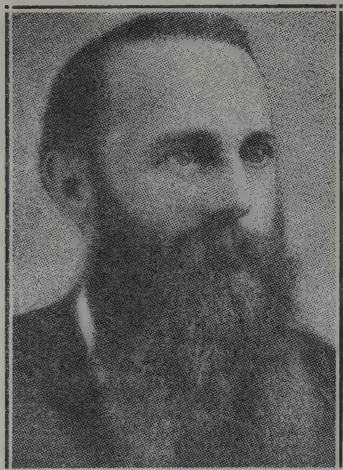
From London he made numerous contributions to the periodical literature of Europe and America, and wrote several books. His *Criticism of Political Economy* contained the germ of his colossal and classic work *Capital*. Referring to the latter in "*Hyndman, Prophet of Socialism*," (published by Geo. Allen and Unwin, Limited in 1927, for the Hyndman Literary Committee), F. J. Gould writes, "For sheer, dogged acute detection and classification of the facts of profiteering commercialism, this *Critical Analysis of Capitalist Production* (such is its sub-title) surpassed all economic treatises of the nineteenth century. A list of the authorities consulted, books and official reports, etc., attests Marx's years of studiousness, mainly in the Reading Room of the British Museum."

To epitomise these volumes is well nigh impossible, but they :

(1) Enunciated the materialistic conception of history, i.e., that ". . . in every historical epoch, the prevailing mode of economic production and exchange, and the social organisation necessarily following from it, form the basis upon which is built up, and from which alone can be explained, the political and intellectual history of that epoch."

(Probably no contention of Marx has been so much assailed as this one, exception being taken to its, over-dogmatic assertion, by the greatest British exponent of Marxian philosophy, H. M. Hyndman, who expressed the view that "Economics, in the main, though by no means wholly, guide the course of human development.")

(2) Gave a lucid and exhaustive exposition of the theory and workings of "surplus-value." Marx means by this term the difference between the cost of labour power and the value it creates. He explains that in the production of commodities, the transformation of raw materials from one form to another—wood to a chair, for instance, no increase whatever occurs in the materials themselves (the timber may actually be less in quantity in the finished chair) yet the market price, value in exchange, is increased. The



H. M. HYNDMAN, 1884.
(Died, 1921).

reason, he diagnoses, is that the produced commodity contains the original raw materials *plus labour power*, and that this added value costs less to procure than it creates. The capitalist enters into production, and purchases machinery, plant and labour power, which represents so much value. When he places his commodities on the market he realises more than their cost of production. This is the "surplus-value" of labour power. It is unpaid for labour, which the capitalist gets for nothing, and is the source of all his profits.

(3) Demonstrated that Capitalism was the outcome of an evolutionary process—that it would develop via the combine and trust to eventually eliminate the "free competition" on which it was supposed to be based—and that it contained within itself the germ of its own destruction.

To return to Dr. Aveling: "Above all. . . Marx was a man of action. He was a practical revolutionist."

His studies revealed to him both the injustice of capitalist society and how to alter it.

In conjunction with Engels, he wrote and launched the Communist Manifesto (1847-48) with its stirring lines: ". . . The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win. Working men of all countries Unite!"

He was also instrumental in founding the International Working Men's

Association (the first International) in 1864.

To the world of economics Marx was the counterpart of Darwin in the realm of biology.

To quote Dr. Aveling once more: "He was, is, and for ever will be, the leader of multitudes of men and women, many of whom will never read a line of his writings."

ENGLAND AND THE CONTINENT.

The International Working Men's Association was established in London on September 28th, 1864, with Ed. S. Beesley, the Positivist, in the chair, and the Provisional Council then elected included Geo. Howell, Benj. Lucraft, Randal Cremer, and Geo. Odger, with Karl Marx for Germany, and correspondents for France, Poland, America, Switzerland, Belgium, Italy and Spain. Its rules stated that "all societies and individuals adhering to it will acknowledge truth, justice, and morality as the basis of their conduct towards each other and towards all men without regard to colour, creed or nationality," and urged the necessity of national bodies co-operating internationally. With the battle cry, "No rights without duties, no duties without rights," it embraced men of widely differing opinions.

A further conference was held in Geneva in 1866, from which its influence grew, particularly on the continent. The new Socialism, to which an impetus was given by the publication in Germany (1867) of the first volume of *Das Kapital*—twenty years before an English translation appeared—also made considerable headway, especially in Germany and France. In addition other political, religious, military and economic events occurred abroad that had wide effect.

The movements led by Mazzini and Garibaldi against the power of the Papacy for a united Italy that came to a successful issue in 1870, and the rise and defeat of the communards of Paris in the spring of '71, roused the workers of Europe, fired their imaginations, and stirred the world.

Waves of republicanism, democracy, and free thought swept across the channel to Britain and reached Bristol.

Garibaldi, the red-shirted champion of Italian unity, who visited

London in the spring of 1864 and received a wonderful reception from the cheering crowds that lined the streets to an estimated number of three hundred thousand, and spoke to a gathering of twenty thousand people in the Crystal Palace, passed through the city.

Charles Bradlaugh, the great apostle of individualism and anti-socialist, in addition to his strenuous secularist propaganda, addressed huge audiences in London and the provinces on "The Impeachment of the House of Brunswick," and during the same years Sir Charles Dilke lectured up and down the land on "The Cost of the Crown."

Large meetings of Bristolians, in the old Broadmead Rooms, heard them both at different dates on these subjects and were moved to high pitches of enthusiasm.

In the country "A Republican Constitution" was also being advocated by Joseph Chamberlain.

IN BRISTOL.

New organisations expressing diversified advanced opinion sprang up in Bristol as elsewhere. At the "Coach and Horses" Inn, in Broadmead, the Republican League held sway with quite a large following, and at the same place the Irish Nationalists foregathered.

The Liberal Party found these new influences permeating its members to a considerable extent. So much so that when a parliamentary vacancy occurred through the death of the Hon. F. H. F. Berkeley early in March, 1872, the party divided into three camps.

The Executive Committee of the Association considered two names—Mr. Kirkman Hodgson (a Bank of England director) and Mr. Elisha Robinson (a large local employer of Labour), and by ten votes to one selected the banker. In spite of this Mr. Robinson expressed his determination to fight, but "a working class candidate" was demanded by a third section of the party. In their opinion Mr. Geo. Odger (of London) a shoemaker son of a Cornish miner, one of the foremost trades unionists of the time and a member of the first Provisional Council of the International Working Men's Association, was the man for the occasion.

The Ballot Bill providing for secret voting at elections, rejected

by the House of Lords in the preceding year, was again before the Comomns, supported by Gladstone; and Berkeley, like many other Liberals, was prominently associated with its advancement. The only unity these three sections of the local Liberal Party could arrive at was to take a "test" ballot of the electorate as to which of the three men should become the party's candidate at the election and to abide by the result—a democratic procedure with much virtue in it.

Odger opened his campaign on March 9th at a densely crowded meeting in the Broadmead Rooms, many hundreds being turned away. Above the platform in red letters were the words:

"WORKING MEN OF ENGLAND—VOTE FOR ODGER! THE MAN WHO REFUSED THE OFFER OF £1,000 AT LAMBETH TO RETIRE AND THUS SELL YOU AND ME!"

On either side of the hall were the inscriptions:

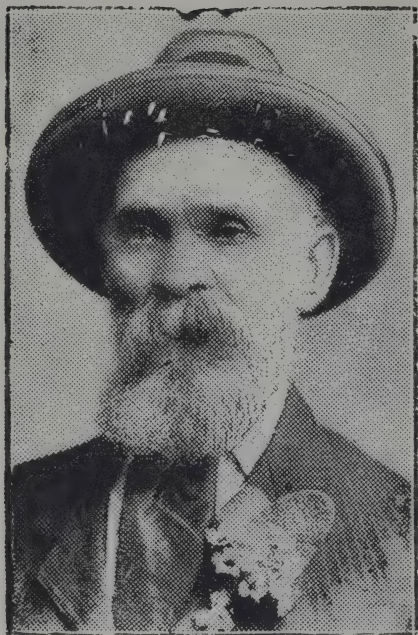
"LIBERTY, FRATERNITY,
EQUALITY,"
and

"DEMOCRACY THE WIDE
WORLD O'ER."

Before the meeting commenced cheers were called and heartily given for "the man who had brought Odger down" (Mr. J. Moss).

Mr. John Cawsey, a prominent local trade unionist, took the chair. On rising to address the gathering, Odger, who was described by a young man who looked down on the scene from the small gallery at the back of the platform, as "a little, fiery, bald-headed man," was greeted with loud applause and some show of disapproval. In opening, Odger said, "The principles that he represented were beyond the interest of any class that was now represented in the Commons," and concluding a long speech that dealt extensively with the measures before Parliament and the country, he declared he was "going on with the fight for Labour."

During the address there were lively scenes and interruptions, including a cry of "Fire" and a rush across the reporters' table for the high platform. In the scrimmage one of the pressmen had a hand damaged through its being trod on.



JOHN GREGORY

Shoemaker-Poet and Pioneer
Socialist. (Died 1922.)

A resolution of approval and support of the candidature, proposed "amid great confusion" by Mr. Williams and seconded by Mr. Moss, Junr., was carried with about fifty dissentients, and was accompanied by "great cheering."

Open Air Meetings in furtherance of the campaign were the order of the following days, and were held at Finzel's Sugar Refinery (Counterslip), The Exeter Shed (Pylle Hill), The Hide and Skin Market (West Street), and Bedminster Bridge.

The test ballot poll was open for two days (March 22nd and 23rd) with this result:

Robinson	4,502
Hodgson	2,861
Odger	1,335

Thus Robinson became the official candidate and at the election was returned:

Robinson (Lib.)	7,832
Sholto Vere Hare (Con.)	7,062

But there was a sequel, Mr. Robinson being unseated, on appeal, by reason of bribery on the part of his agent at the "test ballot."

A few years later (1877) Odger died at the age of 64, and of him John Gregory wrote:

"... Garland his mem'ries, ye that walk behind;

Esteem them for his sake, a golden lot:

Remember no faint fault, if fault ye find;

Deep in oblivion let it be forgot.

In days when men were scarce, he was a man,

Expert in battle with gigantic wrong,

Daring as David, that in Israel's van

Met in unequal fight the foeman strong. . ."

TRADE UNIONISM.

Labour unrest was ripe at this period of which two typical instances follow.

Joseph Arch visited Bristol in February, 1873, and addressed a large meeting "chiefly of the working class," at the Broadmead Rooms, over which Mr. Mark Whitwill presided, and a resolution favourable to the Agricultural Labourers' Union was adopted, but later in the year several who became associated with the branch had to leave the district, and eventually found employment in the North of England.

In the large club room of the "Coach and Horses" Inn during the same month (February), a meeting was held under the chairmanship of Mr. John Cawsey, for consideration of the conditions of the Building Trade, and to give notice to the employers of a demand for a general advance of wages and the formation of a code of working rules; and the secretary, Mr. T. Kelly, moved that the application should be for an advance of 3/- per week. "During the year," he said, "their average wage at present was 16/6 per week, or from five to nine shillings lower than in some other towns, and they were without a single working rule."

The motion was seconded by Geo. Carpenter, supported by Tom Thomas, and agreed to unanimously. The employers' reply was under consideration two months later. It was to advance wages to fourpence farthing an hour, *i.e.*, a farthing an hour by the larger firms and a half-penny by the smaller. Much dissatisfaction was expressed at the meagreness of the offer, and the treasurer, Mr. T. Stephens, in an

energetic speech, urged the necessity of all in the trade joining the union to strengthen their efforts to obtain more humane conditions of life.

BRISTOL TRADES COUNCIL.

It will be recognised that at this date all Trade Unions were confined to craftsmen and the skilled trades. Each jealously guarded the rights of its particular craft, but the interrelation of trades and mutual interests of the workers engaged therein, was being manifested. In this year (1873) the organised workers of Bristol added a new weapon to their armour, by founding the Bristol Trades Council for more intimate connection and friendly relationship between all branches of the operative classes as well as for united, sympathetic efforts on all questions affecting their interest, whether in a local or national sense.

This was a decided step forward, but its significance was entirely industrial. Trade Unionists then were either Liberals or Tories, their political views being regarded as much a matter for private opinion as was their religious faith, and discussions on both topics were taboo at lodge meetings and ruled out.

The Trades Council's first three secretaries were Tom Thomas, G. F.

Jones and J. W. H. Wall, in the order named.

Five years later (1878) the Trade Unions honoured the local movement by holding Congress at "The Athenaeum," in Corn Street. This was the first visit of the Trades Union Congress to Bristol, and one hundred and thirty-six delegates attended, representing 114 unions with a total membership of 623,936.

WM. HARRISON RILEY.

A further link between "The International" and Bristol was in the person of Wm. Harrison Riley.

Born at Manchester, the son of a Methodist local preacher, he had an interesting career.

He learned the art of engraving and when of age went to America, where he worked at his trade for three years. Then he came back to England and acted as a commercial traveller for his father who was connected with a cloth printing factory. Whilst so engaged he became interested in socialist philosophy and began to write on that and kindred subjects in the press, but the year 1866 saw him back in America. This time he was associated with a jewellery business in several towns. He also continued journalism, and met Walt Whitman.

Four years later he returned once more to the old country and settled for a time in London, where he renewed his literary work, and amongst his writings were a series of ten "Yankee Letters to British Workmen."

EDITOR AND PUBLISHER.

It was natural that he should be in the International Working Men's Association, and on March 2nd, 1872 he edited and published *The International Herald*. It appeared weekly and from about its seventh issue was the recognised voice of the English section of the International. In all eighty-two numbers appeared. The title of the paper was then altered to *The Republican Herald*, and in April, '74 this was again changed to *The Herald and Helpmate*, but its publication ceased in April, '75. The last copy was issued from Phippen Street, Bristol, Riley having come to the city that month with his wife and family to manage a Mutual Help Club.



WILLIAM BASTER

(Prominent in the Movement from 1874, died, 1908).

Amongst those interested in this venture was Wm. Baster who came over from Bath. The club house, which was ideally situated in Redcliff, on the bend of the road facing the statue of Chatterton, had been fitted up by two members, E. J. Hobbes and Tom Thomas.

in the charge of a committee to which John Sharland was honorary secretary and Mr. and Mrs. Riley were appointed its managers. It opened its doors to both sexes, and was a big centre of educational classes, including languages, discussions, and games, in addition to



Mr. and Mrs. Riley with their son George and daughter. Harrison Riley on right.

In his *Study in Democracy* (the history of the Co-operative Movement in Bristol) Ed. Jackson writes, "The enterprise had for its objects co-operative distribution as well as educational lectures and social meetings."

THE DRINK QUESTION.

Proposed regulations regarding the sale of intoxicants on the premises led to such differences of opinion that Riley, with a portion of the committee and some members, withdrew, and opened a Social Improvement Institute at 6 Brunswick Square, on December 4th, '75. The new club—wholly temperance—was

having an excellent entertainment party. On its musical side the institute was exceptionally fortunate in the association of the Sharland family with it, a gifted and enthusiastic group who voluntarily devoted their abilities to it, and who played a large and inspiring part in the city's subsequent socialist movement.

Owing to lack of financial support the club closed after eighteen months, but the effort was later described as producing good moral results.

THE SOCIALIST.

Riley then left Bristol for Sheffield, where from July to Dec-

ember, 1877 he published, under his own editorship, yet another paper. This was *The Socialist*, but only six monthly numbers appeared.

The opening line of the first issue was a quotation :

"Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

Three others followed, then the Editor's greeting :

"TO CHRISTIANS : If you are Christians indeed, and not merely professors—quacks, impostors—you are Socialists; for Jesus Christ, as an advocate of Socialism, was the chief of all of whom Englishmen have known or read. During the time of Jesus and his Apostles no person was accepted as a Christian who was not a Socialist. If the 'Christianity' of these times is identical with the Christianity of Christ's time, then you are Socialist or you are not Christians but are followers and imitators of Ananias and Saphira.

"TO ATHEISTS : Some of you have unwisely thought that most, if not all, of the chief Socialists have been 'Atheists.' In this matter you have deceived yourselves and others. All true Socialists feel that they have little time to waste either on theology or anti-theology.

"TO EACH READER : A Socialist is a person who endeavours so to improve society as to have it based and regulated on the most equitable and economical principles."

In the second copy he explains. . . "From each according to his ability; to each according to his needs," is one of the chief rules of Socialism. . . Let the reader inspect his hand, and observe each finger. The fingers are not exactly alike in appearance or strength. The little finger is the weakest of all, yet it is not insufficiently supplied with blood on that account! Each part of the human body works according to its ability; and though one member may be much weaker than another, it is supplied with sustenance according to its needs. The law as formulated (not 'made') by Socialists . . . is thus proved to be natural, practical and divine."

A BRITISH CONSTITUTION.

In the final copy of *The Socialist*, Riley suggests "a British Constitution" of 22 articles, "which will be added to." Here are a few extracts.

Article 1.—"The association of the people as a Commonwealth is for the purpose of increasing the happiness of the people. . ."

Article 2.—"As the maintenance of human life is, inevitably, at the cost of human labour, it is the duty of all able-bodied persons to earn their own living by their own labour. . ."

Article 5.—"The land of Great Britain is the national inheritance of the Commonwealth, and all buildings on the land of Great Britain, and all the crops or produce of the land and the waters of Great Britain are the property of the Commonwealth, to be used for the good of the Commonwealth."

Article 6.—"Food, fuel, clothing, and all other portable materials necessary for the maintenance and protection of human life shall be distributed to all citizens according to their need from the public stores. . ."

Article 19.—"All citizens have a right to do as they please, providing that they do not threaten or interfere with the rights of other people."

A VISIONARY—A SEER.

To himself he applied the words (1877), "I am glad to know that I am, to some extent, a visionary—a seer. I know that the blind—the non-seers—will grin and chuckle at this thankful confession and will continue to lead the other blind men into every orthodox ditch. I will continue to respect the faculty of sight—insight and foresight—and will continue, with other and greater seers to endeavour to enlarge and improve the sight of mankind, and to oppose the champions of darkness—the revilers and destroyers of sight."

FORS CLAVIGERA.

John Ruskin was attracted by Riley's forceful writing, and placed him in charge of a small estate that he had purchased at Totley, near Sheffield, where, under the Guild of St. George, an industrial experiment was to be made on the lines indicated in *Fors Clavigera*, but Ruskin's health failed, and the project was not proceeded with.

Edward Carpenter, M.A., who was conducting a Cambridge University Extension Scheme series of lectures on music and scientific subjects, became closely acquainted with Riley

and held his ideals in high esteem, but Riley did not stay in England much longer. He sailed again to America with his wife and family, this time finally settling there, and in the new continent much of his time and energy was freely spent in the spread of Socialist theories.

His own death occurred at Lunenburg, U.S.A., in 1907, and American press notices showed that the one time resident in Bristol had won the love and respect of a wide circle.

WORKMEN'S ASSOCIATIONS.

The centre of gravity for Bristolians with advanced views in the closing seventies and opening eighties was The Working Men's Reform Association. It met (1879) at The British Workman Coffee Tavern, West Street, Old Market, and (December, '81) resolved itself into The Bristol Radical Reform Association (W. H. Dowding, Hon. Sec.) and removed to The Castle Street Coffee Palace.

In the main its membership was of workmen and reflected their view of life. Pinched by poverty in every way, as the years passed, and with poor prospects of even common comforts in old age, they saw their class as innocent victims of injustice. Education, which only became compulsory in 1870, was *not* free un-

til many years later, was at a premium, so that knowledge as to the reason of their plight and its remedy remained equally obscure.

Bristol had two representatives in Parliament, Samuel Morley and Lewis Fry. As Liberals, both were backed by the association, but signs of vacillation and independent thought were frequent. Thus in August, '79, the association, thinking that Lewis Fry could not properly attend to the local as well as parliamentary work considered asking him to resign the positions he held on the School Board and City Council, but a fortnight later agreed "to hold the matter over for the present."

Both M.P.s were thanked (March, '80) for their support to the Bill for "The Abolition of Game Laws, etc." and in the following May, Mr. Fry was also thanked for supporting Bradlaugh in his struggle with the House of Commons on the theological oaths question, while Mr. Morley was condemned for opposing him.

Bradlaugh filled a big place in these Radicals' picture of life. Several times they brought him to address mass meetings in the Colston Hall. His speeches, by helping thinkers to throw aside outgrown lines of thought and so preparing the way for new ones, were of intellectual value, but contained no really constructive proposals for the workers' deliverance from their economic and social ills. Enlightenment on these phases of life came from other sources.

NEW IDEALS.

Two outspoken Victorians—Chas. Kingsley and John Ruskin, called for an ethical interpretation of political economy, and provided a fresh mould for the flow of public opinion. Ruskin's declaration in *Unto this Last*: "There is no wealth but life—life, including all its powers of love, of joy, and of admiration. . . That country is the greatest which nourishes the greatest number of noble and happy human beings. . ." was in strong contrast to the commercialist method of measuring wealth in terms of trade and red-tape-tied bundles of banknotes. It sunk deep into the minds of humanitarians.

A book by Henry George (of California) entitled *Progress and Pov-*



W. H. DOWDING

(Member original Pioneer Class, '83, died 1918).

erty was published in England in 1879, and selling in many thousands, also made a big impression. It seized on land monopoly as the root cause of the miseries of the masses, but never realised the menace of wage paying and surplus value absorbing capitalism—"Stone blind in one eye," the author of *The Co-operative Commonwealth* (Laurence Gronland) tersely put it. George's proposal of the "Single Tax" as the universal panacea was popularised by his lectures throughout Britain. Its very simplicity made a wonderful appeal to the people, and it was particularly acceptable to the Liberals and Radicals with their two fundamentals, "Free Trade," and "England, the Workshop of the World." The book's basic value, however, was that its challenge to the sanctity of private property led to the wider socialist conception of society.

DEMOCRATIC FEDERATION.

A great Englishman, H. M. Hyndman, wrote an article in the *Nineteenth Century Magazine* (January, '81) entitled *The Dawn of a Revolutionary Epoch*, and therein sounded a new and true note:

"We, as a nation, have laid the foundation of that trinity of liberty—Freedom of Speech, Freedom of Trade, and Freedom of Religion, which will remain the title of England to honour and to reverence when all other smaller deeds are forgotten in the mists of antiquity. It remains for us to lead the way with safety in that great social organisation which is the work of the immediate future, to secure for all the same happiness and enjoyment of life which now belongs to the few."

He knew the existing political parties would not "lead the way," so faced the formation of one that would, and persuaded a meeting of Radical clubmen and Irish delegates (Westminster Palace Hotel, June 8th, 1881) to establish a "Democratic Party or Democratic Federation of Radical and Kindred Clubs." Hyndman had just published *England for All*. The book contained eight essays of a collectivist tendency, two of which, on *Labour and Capital* were based on Marxian theories. To everyone present he gave a copy. The title page

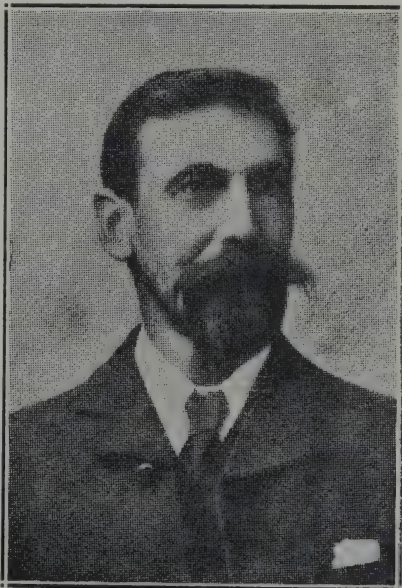
announced its dedication to "The Democratic and Working Men's Clubs of Great Britain and Ireland," and its cover was stamped "The New Party."

The new federation's programme included land nationalisation, but Hyndman's very thinly veiled intention was that it should press for the attainment of England for all, and within a short time, this became its declared mission.

ANTICIPATIONS.

Kingsley, Ruskin and Hyndman were splendid nineteenth century examples of the seers most ages have produced, but from the general truth that out of the existent economic conditions new moral ideals are conceived, which in their turn affect the economic development itself, it follows that fresh vistas of progress open up more or less simultaneously to different minds and in areas similarly affected. This was the case now.

In Bristol a small band existed whose eyes were opening to the rising morn of labour's emancipation. Slowly but surely radicalism, republicanism and secularism were



ROBERT WEARE
(Socialist stalwart and propagandist from early '84. Died 1920).

being revealed to them as the merest bare bones of intellectuality to a world hungry for meals of solid social reform. They asked, "What can be done to provide the 'meat'? Why not a branch of the Democratic Federation for Bristol?" Talks and discussions between themselves, meetings, private and semi-private, and canvassing of apparently "hopefuls" were numerous, but with no tangible results. The gist of the replies was, "Omelets? Yes, very desirable, very, but there must be no breaking of eggs," forgetting that eggs, anyway, are poor stuff with which to build bulwarks against a rising tide!

In 1883 an independent candidate, Mr. F. Gilmore Barnet, contested the North St. Philip's Ward for a seat on the City Council. He advocated Municipal Trams, Water and Gas, and several who were connected with the Radical Reformers assisted in his campaign. This fact coupled with the association's expressed approval of Land Nationalisation gave to some, ground for hoping that it might be willing to affiliate to the Democratic Federation.

Joynes' "Christian Socialist" of October, '83, reports:

"We have in Bristol some earnest supporters, and shall probably have an active branch shortly at work, unless one of the existing associations affiliates itself to us."

RADICALS FALTER.

At its meeting of January 21st, '84, Mr. Robert Sharland moved:

"That the Bristol Radical Reform Association do become affiliated to the Democratic Federation."

He spoke from notes and they show that he had prepared a reasoned case. He compared the programme of the Federation with that of the Association, emphasised what they had in common, stressed the need for social and economic reforms in addition to the purely political, and by instancing the strides the cause of Irish Home Rule was making by reason of the Irish Nationalist Party's rigidly independent policy, urged the wisdom of working men taking a similar line of action. Mr. John Sharland seconded, and considerable discussion followed. Mr. Geo. Powell (the chairman) and several others urged that the matter

should not be pressed, so seeing wholehearted co-operation was unattainable, and with another card "up his sleeve," Sharland withdrew the motion and no vote was taken. Eggs again! but this time it was not a mere "rising tide" which ebbs, but forces from an eternal spring that at most could only be diverted. The action of the radicals merely turned it into what all socialists to-day are agreed was a better channel.

PIONEER CLASS AND BRANCH.

In the fall of the preceding year (November 8th, '83) a little group of men met by arrangement at the Christmas Street Coffee Tavern (the building has since been demolished) to begin what they designated a "Pioneer Class"—the very name is prophetic—"for the discussion of democratic and social reform schemes, and the mutual improvement of all its members."

At the first class, to a small audience, Robert Sharland read a paper on "Socialism," and a prolonged discussion ensued. To an average onlooker these men would have appeared just a company of ordinary workmen assembled to compare notes on subjects of mutual interest. That is all they were; but oft in the world's unfolding had similar men risen to great occasions. This class proved to be another instance.

Eight weeks later "The Democratic Federation"^a was discussed. Its declared objects were recognised as "limited," but that it would soon become a power in propagating the principles of a Socialist Commonwealth was sensed, and the character and calibre of its leaders—H. M. Hyndman, William Morris and Herbert Burrows—were as a magnet to which they were not unwillingly drawn.

Barely a month after the Radical Association had shirked the issue of affiliation, John Sharland proposed and H. G. Jefferis seconded a motion to dissolve the Pioneer Class and to replace it with a Bristol Branch of the Democratic Federation.

There was no opposition, and H. G. Jefferis (Secretary), R. Sharland, W. H. Dowding, and J. Sharland were appointed as a committee to give effect to the decision.

They communicated with H. H. Champion at headquarters on February 23rd, and in the next issue of

Justice (March 1st) appeared a notice of the new Branch, which was confirmed at a branch meeting four days later. In addition to the committee, W. A. Sharland, Wm. Baster and T. F. Sharland were named as members.

The resolve of February 20th, '84 marks an epoch, and those responsible for it were the pioneers and founders of the city's great independent Socialist Labour Movement, of which the *Bristol Labour Weekly* is a proud part.

Another inextinguishable beacon fire had been kindled. No longer hampered or handicapped by allegiance to the parties of Capitalism, and sharing Swinburne's feeling when he sang :

"In hearts, and lips, and heads

Our staffs and weapons are,

The light we walk in darkens sun
and moon and star,"

they joyfully set foot upon the road leading themselves and their fellows to the achievement of the greatest social revolution the world has ever seen.

EDUCATE, AGITATE, ORGANISE.

This was the work at hand. The new evangelists endured no doubt as to the multitude's ready acceptance of their message, once the truth and beauty of the socialist gospel was made clear to them, but of its members none were speakers or writers capable of carrying on a vigorous propaganda. Isolated—no similar body existed west of London—to make themselves efficient was the only way. To this end they met week by week to discuss various essential subjects, gaining more knowledge and developing powers of speech and debate as well as acquiring the requisite aptitude for publicly presenting the case for the new world of their aspiration. Friends were invited to these meetings—usually still held in the Christmas Street Coffee Tavern—and whenever and wherever possible conversations on socialism were entered into with others.

ROBERT WEARE.

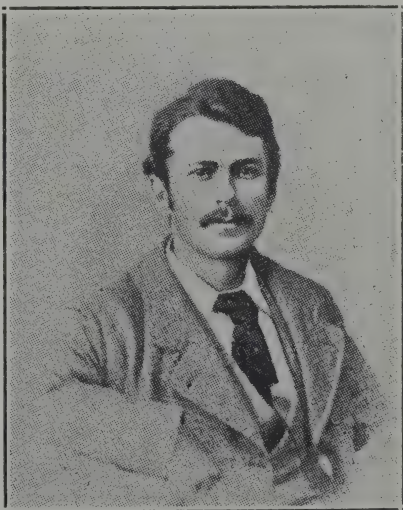
Nearly forty years afterwards Robert Sharland wrote, "the Bristol Socialists blessed the accident, Providence, chance, fate, or whatever it was that brought Robert Weare to be the next door neighbour to my

brother Will. Over the garden wall separating their back gardens, discussions were prolonged and strenuous. These, with the reading of the very small quantity of socialist literature available, including the two but little known monthly periodicals, *The Christian Socialist* (edited by J. L. Joynes) and *To-day*, ended in his joining the branch. Robert Weare was a "catch" that resulted in great events in Bristol and elsewhere."

EDWARD CARPENTER.

Whilst passing through Bristol on his way from the North to relatives residing on the Cotswold Hills, Edward Carpenter first met Robert Sharland, and a life-long friendship and comradeship was commenced. During the next few years he paid several visits to the West and took a great interest in the Bristol Movement. Free of any charge whatever, not even for railway expenses, he came to the meetings, talked with the members and addressed public assemblies.

A man with vast knowledge, deep insight, and a great love of humanity, the branch had in him a true counsellor, whose teaching and example inspired all. It would be hardly possible to set too high a standard on what he did. His philosophy was summed up by H. S.



EDWARD CARPENTER, 1880.

Salt, "Love is the one ultimate law, equality the one ultimate condition."

Here is a characteristic expression from his pen :

"If I am not level with the lowest I am nothing; and if I did not know for a certainty that the craziest sot in the village is my equal, and were not proud to have him walk with me as my friend, I would not write another word—for in this is my strength."

Carpenter's audiences were deeply moved by his addresses and several converts were made. After one given at the Castle Coffee Palace this most cheering letter was received (August, '85) :

"I was delighted with Mr. Carpenter's lecture on Socialism. It is the best, clearest and most sensible elucidation of true principled Socialism of any I have heard or read. . . . You can enrol me a member, and I have no doubt I can induce another to become an earnest member and worker if you can drop me a line to say that Mr. Carpenter has indicated the lines Socialists are really taking. . . .—Robert S. Gilliard."

The line was dropped, and before the month was out Gilliard and "the other"—James Treasure—were participating members in the movement to which while life lasted both gave great service.

TOWARDS SOCIAL DEMOCRACY.

A few further words on Ed. Carpenter completes the description of the environment that shaped the intellectual and ethical outlook of the earliest Bristol Socialists. Two of his first works on social questions, *Towards Democracy and England's Ideal*, include the "first principles" he explained, and of these, an inkling is given in two or three sentences taken from the latter :

"In modern society the strangulation of the growth of the people is effected by the capitalist class. . . . The commercial and capitalist envelope has undoubtedly served to protect and give form to (and even nourish) the growing life of the people. But now, in that respect, it appears merely as an obstacle and an evil, and will inevitably be removed by a violent disruption or possibly by a gradual absorption into the socialised proletariat beneath.

"Socialism . . . springs from and demands as its basis a new senti-

ment of humanity, a higher morality. That is the essential part of it.

"I say from this day you must . . . be determined that *nothing* shall move you from the purpose you have set before you. The righteous distribution in society of the fruits of your own and other men's labour, the return to Honesty as the sole possible basis of national life and national safety."

The growth of the Democratic Federation into the Social Democratic Federation ("S.D.F.") was complete by October, 1884. It now declared for :

"The socialisation of the Means of Production, Distribution and Exchange, to be controlled by a Democratic State in the interest of the entire community, and the complete Emancipation of Labour from the domination of Capitalism and Landlordism, with the establishment of Social and Economic Equality between the sexes"; and as immediate steps towards its realisation, a long list of palliative measures to be pressed for was appended.

Nationally, this was an event of first class importance, but it had been anticipated in Bristol where only the slight variation of title was involved, although it was always reserved that differences of opinion regarding some of the "palliatives" were permissible.

JOHN BURNS.

Beside the value of discussions on questions of policy, etc., delegates to national conferences derive much inspiration from personal contact with those from other centres, and it was with regret that the Bristol Branch found itself unable to surmount the difficulties of sending a local comrade to the early national assemblies. On two occasions in '85, however, "the man with the red flag"—John Burns—accepted its credentials and expressed communicated views on the agenda subjects.

Inability to send a local representative to the national committee—to which they were entitled by rule—was even greater, but J. Hunter Watts (of London) accepted, and admirably fulfilled, this duty. He kept in close touch with the branch, and an act of local historic interest that he performed will be related later.

POLITICAL ACTION.

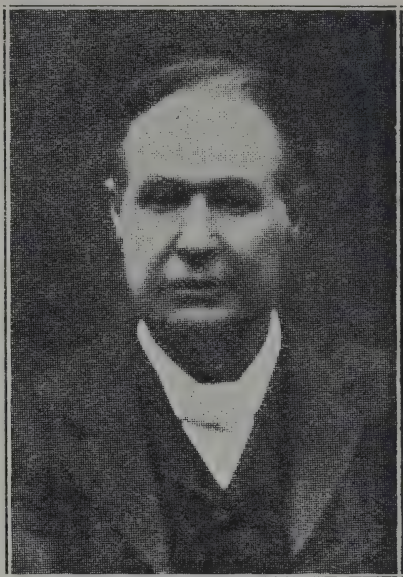
Is political action advisable? To present day Bristol Socialists, with practically half the electorate voting Labour, looking confidently towards early control of the municipality, and with real hope of soon winning more parliamentary seats, this question raises a smile.

At the end of '84, however, it caused a serious difference of opinion in the national council of the S.D.F. Hyndman and Wm. Morris, who jointly published *A Summary of the Principles of Socialism*, in January, '84, took opposite views on the point now raised. Hyndman, who then and to the time of his death (November, 26th, 1921, aged 79) always felt "the revolution" to be near at hand, regarded the "political forms" of the day as many years behind the "economic" and to pull up the leeway as urgent; was all for entering the political field. Morris hesitated: "We ought rigidly to exclude anything of the nature of immediate action... our efforts should be purely educational," he urged, and in a letter to a friend wrote, "The aim of Socialism should be the founding of a religion."

The issue sharpened, and on Christmas Eve, '84, the Morris group withdrew. In the following month they formed the Socialist League, but the split was quite impersonal. The seceders were in fact the majority, and left the minority of the Council in control!

The "quarrel" occasioned Hyndman deep concern and pain. He mentioned it years later as "the saddest episode in the entire course of my Socialist career." The passage of time fortunately brought complete reconciliation and understanding. The Chief Whip of the Labour Party (Tom Kennedy, M.P.) from the House of Commons, in July, 1927, wrote, "'Hyndman was right,' said Morris on a Burnley platform" (the borough Hyndman never represented but four times contested as a Social Democrat) "'and I was quite wrong,' and, Kennedy continues, 'not all of Hyndman's critics and detractors have been so generous.'"

The Bristol Branch carefully considered the cleavage, and unanimously decided to remain with the S.D.F. (May, 1885). Political action, they thought, could be of the finest "educational value," and a local



ROBT. S. GILLIARD
(Pioneer Socialist, 1885 onwards.
Died 1923. Author "Divine Basis of
Society.")

movement towards it was actually under way.

NEW ACTIVITIES.

Meantime, the weekly educational meetings, in which, by handbills, the public were invited to join, were supplemented by activities of a more public nature.

On June 12th, '84, a resolution was adopted and sent to the authorities:

"... Trusting that the Government will communicate with foreign powers seeking their concurrence in the establishment of an International Court of Arbitration, to which all misunderstandings between nations may be submitted for amicable arrangement; and under no pretence shall a war be undertaken without the direct consent of the representatives of the people."

Of others communicated to the press during the year was one "sympathising with Mr. Williams and the people of Lancashire in their courageous resistance to the extortion of tithe rents. . ."

Another:

"... Sincerely sympathised with the crofters of Scotland and its

adjoining islands, in their resistance to landlord tyranny which has so long oppressed them, and strongly condemned the action of the Government in sending an armed force to carry out evictions and collect landlords' rent."

And in March, '85, the branch "condemned as unjust and cruel the war now in progress in the Soudan, and strongly protested against the prolongation of hostilities."

War was ever the enemy of the people!

NEW MEMBERS AND VENTURES.

In addition to Robert Weare, R. S. Gilliard and Jas. Treasure, John Gregory, F. Hulbert, J. Watts-Treasure, J. Moule, E. J. Hobbes, J. Carpenter, G. Milton, Hy. Riches, and some others were enrolled as members.

The motive of these early Socialists was pure "Love of Humanity." Not only did this sustain them, "... without edifices, or rules, or trustees, or any arguments, the institution of the dear love of comrades," but not one wavered or failed the cause. They all kept faith until the end.

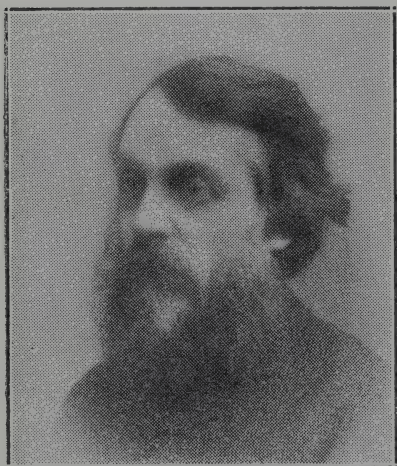
Lewis Lyons, from London, "looked in" at a branch meeting in June, '85. He told of great head-

way in London and some other large towns, due to open air meetings at which speeches, no matter how crudely delivered, were ably supplemented by distribution of socialist literature and the sale of the weekly paper *Justice*. Regarding *Justice* it is of interest to here interpolate that before its publication many schemes had been vainly discussed by leading socialists for producing and financing a sorely-needed journal "solely in the interest of the workers," when a gift of £300 from Ed. Carpenter for this purpose came as manna from heaven and made it possible. The paper first appeared on January 19th, '84, the conductors explaining that they had to charge a fair price (2d.) as, "in order to remain independent it must be clear from trade advertisements or capitalist money," but it was soon found expedient to reduce it to a penny.

Hyndman was its first editor, and its columns included articles and poems from Wm. Morris, and contributions from H. H. Champion, Andreas Schen, Belfort Bax, Herbert Burrows, and the best literary socialists of the day. Allegorical pictures from the elegant pencil of Walter Crane frequently adorned its pages. There is an example of Crane's artistic decorative work at the Royal West of England Academy in Queens Road; on the first floor, four beautifully painted wall lunettes each 24 feet wide, and at night it is illuminated so that the exquisite quality of the workmanship may be readily seen.

Justice's sub-title "The organ of the Social Democracy," signified much, as the S.D.F. had not yet been formed. Always strongly worded and well written, it did a marvellous work. Ever impecunious, it had a terrible struggle for existence. Except its later editors, no contributor was ever paid a penny piece—it was a work of love. For over forty years it never counted the cost of saying plainly what it thought to be true and right, and—except when confiscated by the Government—appeared week by week until January, '25, when it became incorporated with the monthly *Social-Democrat*.

For many years it was the only weekly socialist paper in existence, and the comrades looked forward to each issue as eagerly as "the Sunday dinner."



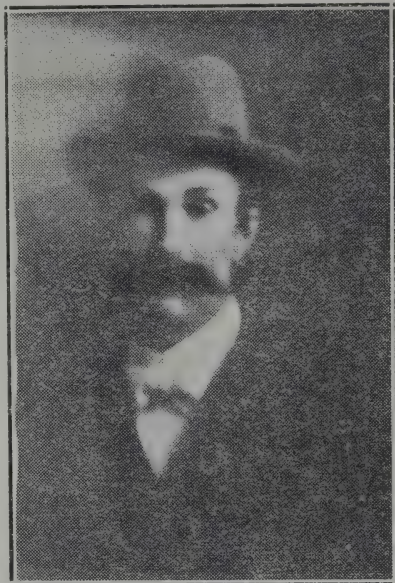
JAMES TREASURE
(Joined the Movement, '85,
died 1896).

TO THE STREETS.

But to return to Lewis Lyons' question—could the Bristol comrades hold open-air meetings? The desirability of it had been agreed often enough, but they were still without speakers. A letter from J. Hunter Watts (of London) settled it. He had business in North Devon, would be passing through Bristol shortly, would defray his own personal expenses, and gladly undertake an open air to show "how it was done." More timorous than it read, the reply was, "Yes, thanks! state the date and we'll arrange." But Hunter Watts' idea was that open airs could be held anywhere, at any time and by anybody—as he would show. Unexpectedly he turned up at the branch meeting a couple of days later. Greetings over, 'twas, "Let's go and hold that meeting." No one had anticipated this, but few in number though large in heart, all at once walked the short distance to "Poyntz' Pool"—the open space facing St. Jude's Church, and before the new road there was made. Here a circle was formed with Watts in its centre. A slightly built, wiry little man, with an air of well being and good education, without platform, stool or chair, just standing on the cobble stones, in a quiet voice that presently rose to a shout, he repeated over and over again, "Friends, we are the Bristol Branch of the Social Democratic Federation, and we are going to hold a meeting. We shall tell you of our message to the workers of the world, what it means to you, and how it will relieve you of your poverty."

A small crowd of the curious gathered, and to those, or to as many of them as stayed long enough to hear any of it—they mainly stayed but a minute or two then passed on—he delivered the new message of hope. He was the only speaker, and the meeting finished as it had begun—small in numbers. With apparently no one but its originators interested, that summer's evening saw the beginning of a work in Bristol that grew beyond measure.

Next week and at other times that autumn the local comrades "open-aired" on their own, by the big lamp at the Ropewalk. Near that same lamp, beneath a similar one in Goodhind Street, also at the other end of that street, at Bath Bridge, Bristol Bridge, and by the Midland



J. HUNTER-WATTS
(held first S.D.F. "Open-Air" in
Bristol, 1885).

Railway Yard on the Batch, other meetings were held regularly in the following year.

THE RED FLAG.

To these the still small membership rolled up well to sell *Justice*, etc., form the nucleus of a crowd, and act as bodyguard when opposition was rowdy, whilst "Bob" Weare, John and "Bob" Sharland did the speaking. Annie Treasure bought a square of red silk and inscribed it with the words, "The Bristol Branch of the Social Democratic Federation." Mounted as a banner it was taken to the meetings, and "the little red flag" visualised "sure hope of the future."

Even earlier than this the socialists were doing better than they knew. Their work, to use Morris' words, "... to open wide the door, for the rich man's hurrying terror, and the slowfoot hope of the poor," was being talked of in other quarters.

The Clifton Literary Society, early in '85, held at Cornwallis Crescent a debate: "That this Society views with alarm the spread of Socialistic principles in England and on the Continent."

The defender of the socialist propaganda was a young man who undertook it at very short notice, "though," as he wrote to a friend who was going to hear the debate, "I am but a half-hearted supporter, certainly a not very deeply read one." He soon afterwards became very enthusiastic and rapidly famous throughout the city—H. H. Gore. Another addition to membership was Henry Rogers who, during the next few years also did good work for the movement.

A fact worthy of note is that from Bath, R. Lanksheer, S. Payne, Richard P. Sharland, and Elias Tuckey had their names added to the roll.

Towards the end of '85 the National Council of the S.D.F. promoted three parliamentary candidatures in the Metropolitan district. Some members alleged that the "means" was provided by conservatives to further tory interests, strongly disapproved, and took a very serious view of it. The Bristol Branch in a letter to the Council (December 20th, '85), described it as "dishonest and humiliating—a breach of principle," and with much evident regret unanimously withdrew from the national body. Henceforward it continued its propaganda as

THE BRISTOL SOCIALIST SOCIETY

which main designation it ever after retained. National disapproval of the Council's act was expressed in the formation of the Socialist Union. C. Fitzgerald (a former secretary of the parent body and otherwise well known as a War Correspondent in Turkey, Greece and Egypt) became its secretary, and of several branches formed in the provinces the Bristol Socialist Society was recognised as one.

Under a managing and editing committee (H. Campbell, J. Ramsay Macdonald and C. Fitzgerald) the Union published *The Socialist*, and Bristol took 100 copies of every issue. At the close of the year this publication ceased and the organisation petered out. Meantime the S.D.F. made it clear that only donations given unconditionally for the Federation's own purposes would be accepted, and the workers' pence then provided its main source of income.

TRADES COUNCIL.

It must have been something like a revolt of Bristol workmen that occurred as long ago as 1878, when Mr. Count fought a City Council election in St. Philip's. Against 1195 votes given Mr. Lewis Fry, he polled 287, but his address which favoured dockisation of the Avon was nothing to set him in a class apart from orthodox politicians. It was an isolated act. All Labour's other political efforts (prior to '85) were as Radicals or Liberals, nor had the Socialists contested elections.

Generally, Labour as yet could see but dimly. As recently as '83 the Trades Union Congress at Nottingham, discussing Land Law Reform, rejected by 90—34 an amendment in favour of Land Nationalisation.

The work of the Parliamentary Committee of the T.U. Congress, aided by James Macdonald, Hy. Broadhurst and Thos. Burt, however, led to a Trade Unionist desire for direct representation at Westminster.

In this movement Bristol was early in the van. The Trades Council took important and far-reaching action which will be related after Wm. Morris' visit to Bristol, and J. Ramsay Macdonald's work with the Bristol S.D.F. has been described.

Now a word on a phase for which the Bristol Socialist Movement became famous throughout the land.

POETRY AND SONG.

"As Socialism was a movement inspired by art as well as of economics" explains an early minute, readings, recitations and music were introduced to the weekly "circle," thus completing and making it "whole."

The Sharlands rendered yeoman service. Inheriting a love of music, which became their life's hobby, Robert, Will and John, whilst little more than boys, attended classes in harmony under Mr. Alfred Stone, the gifted founder of the Bristol Musical Society, and one time conductor of the Bristol Orpheus Society; and in '71 the three were placed first in an all-England competition. Their performances so impressed Mr. Stone that he influenced the award of a special prize to them, and arranged for it to be given in the Broadmead Rooms by Canon Kingsley who would be mak-

ing presentations to other students there, but—modest lads (!)—the brothers desired it not, and the elders conspired to keep away by sending “young John” to receive it alone.

These three with their brothers Jim and Tom charmed most meetings by first rate renderings of German and English male voice music.

At that date very few socialist songs had been written, although songs of Liberty, Freedom and True Brotherhood were in plenty, but with rare exceptions no music for either had been composed. Will Sharland got over this by slightly varying the words to existing melodies, or recasting and adapting some accompaniment and arrangement of old and standard airs to fit the words. This work was acknowledged in the preface to *Chants of Labour*—a song book of the people—the first and

most valuable book of its kind—by its editor, Ed. Carpenter (1888).

Later on the Bristol Socialist Society published several editions of an excellent book of forty Labour songs each with an indicated tune, and several thousand copies were sold. To that and the original musical compositions for socialist songs, etc., by Bristol's workman composer, J. Percival Jones, proper reference must be deferred.

Music and poetry were always as food from the gods, and this new comradeship of song, which included singing in unison of the new songs, and was often extended to the open-air, not only added tone and joy to the meetings, but in W. H. Dowding's words :

“Bade her followers, when
daunted,
Courage new to take.”



The Sharland Brothers in the early '70's with their mother,
Top Row—James, John, Thomas,
Bottom Row—Richard, Mother, Robert, William.

WILLIAM MORRIS.

William Morris, author of "The Earthly Paradise," and poet advocate of socialism, was one of the greatest men of his time. He had a recognised place in the first rank of living poets and no less as an authority on the theory and practice of the decorative arts, but, writes his biographer, J. W. Mackail, "work among his dye-pots and looms, interesting and fascinating as he found it could not fill up the whole of his mind. . . an outer world kept calling him more and more imperiously . . . gradually the fabric of social life itself became the field which he tried to redeem from commercialism and ugliness and to reinstate on a sounder basis."

He was unanimously elected an Honorary Fellow of his College at Oxford—a rare distinction generally reserved for old members who have attained the highest official rank in their profession. The honour was conferred on him on January 13th, 1883. He had gone to Bournemouth that day to see his daughter. On the 17th, after coming back to London, he wrote her, "Such a pile of letters I found waiting me—" It is a coincidence—without relation—that he enrolled himself as a member of the Democratic Federation that same day.

He came to Bristol on March 3rd, 1885, and delivered an address in the Lecture Room of the Museum at the top of Park Street.

Some local merchants desired permission to exhibit some of his designs—wallpaper, tapestry, etc.—in the room, but this was commercialism, and he would have none of it. One shilling and sixpence was the charge for admission to the lecture, but Morris made no fee, and wrote, "Get for my audience those who do labour." So one half of the tickets were sent to the Trades Council and some other labour organisations for free distribution.

One of the "workmen" present described the scene: "The hall was crowded, and Morris walked on to the platform in the manner of a university professor, alone, and without a chairman. He wore the familiar dark blue serge jacket suit and pale blue cotton shirt and collar. His head was massive, lionlike. Rather beyond middle age, his shaggy, dark, curly hair and beard showed traces of greyness. He look-

ed into our faces, but his penetrating eyes seemed to suggest far away thoughts. Sturdily built, he appeared both fearless and conscious of his own strength—the nearest living approach I had ever seen to my ideal human. A wonderfully inspiring figure—and the vision remains.

"The two sections of the audience were poles asunder—the literary folk who were 'curious' and perhaps apprehensive, listened attentively and without emotion until the end, then dutifully joined in the applause of thanks; while we workmen, somewhat shy and painfully conscious of our unusual surroundings and shortcomings, soon realised the presence of a champion, forgot ourselves, and frequently burst into rounds of applause."

The subject of the lecture was

"ART AND LABOUR,"

and of the next day's press report of 4,500 words, the following is a summary—

By "art" he "did not mean high art pictures, sculpture, and things of that sort . . . as he understood it the word comprised the beauty produced by the labour of man both mentally and bodily, the human pleasure of life," and by "labour" he understood "the labour of the working class not non-productive labour." In the middle ages everything that man made was beautiful . . . this was because they were made mainly for use instead of mainly to be bought and sold as is now the case . . . nor was there any division of labour in the workshops. This came later, and . . . the workshop was turned into the factory . . . one machine in fact, of which each individual . . . even his subdivided skill as a division of labour workman, is supplanted by the social organisation of the whole group.

"There are some who will tell you . . . that the condition of the people has much improved during the last fifty years. Shall we then make it a matter of exultation that we have improved a little on the very darkest period of the history of labour in England? Is the improvement, I say, from that welter of misery of which the chartist revolt was a token to be made a standard of our future hopes, and . . . can we venture to hope that this improvement will be steady and permanent unless some real change from the root upward is

made in society? I say no, with all the emphasis I can.

"I have been trying to show you how the *workman* has been robbed of one pleasure—perhaps his most important one—the pleasure in his daily work. He is now only part of a machine and has, indeed, little more than his weariness at the end of his day's work to show him that he has worked at all in the day. Has he not some compensatory pleasure in life outside his work? In his home? Why in these manufacturing districts not even a rich man can have a decent dwelling; since it has been thought a little thing to turn the rivers into filth and put out the sun and make the earth squalid with bricken encampments.

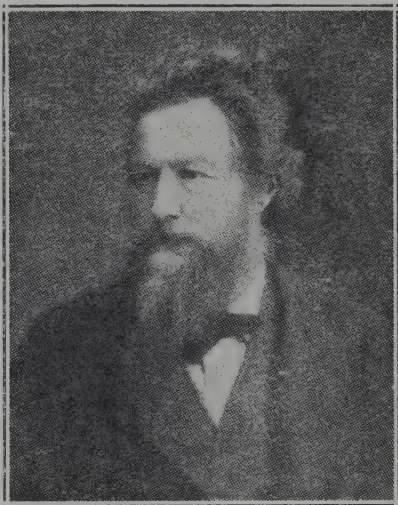
"Or does leisure compensate for his dreary toil?—not sufficient or un-anxious leisure? The workman knows that competition will punish him and his wife and children for every hour's holiday he takes.

"Or high wages?—if, indeed, they could be any good to a man condemned to live all his life in a toiling hell.

"No, his wages cannot be high, so long as profit has to be made out of his labour they must be kept down to a point which a long series of struggles has made him think just necessary to live on.

"Quite plainly I say that the modern workman, the poor man, can have no art. His work will not produce it, and he has neither money to buy it with nor leisure and education, that is to say refinement, to relish it. I fear there are some people who will say that all this doesn't matter at all. After all, I don't care what such people think so long as I can get the workman himself to think that it does matter to him whether he is robbed of the pleasures of life. First, he must claim to live in a pleasant house and in a pleasant place. Secondly, the workman must be well educated—I mean all should be educated according to their capacity and not according to the amount of money which their parents happen to possess—less education than this . . . is a monstrous oppression of the poor by the rich. Thirdly, the workman must have due leisure, which further implies that there must be no idlers and that the duration of the day's work must be legally limited—no useless work must be done—what-

ever of irksome work is left should be done by machines, used, not as now, to grind out profit, but to save labour really. It would follow that whatever other work was done would receive praise when done if it were worthy, and it is most true that all work done with pleasure and worthy of praise produces art, that is to say an essential part of the pleasures of life.



WM. MORRIS, 1880. Died, 1896.

Now I know well enough that this means altering the basis of society, putting socialism, that is universal co-operation, in place of competition or universal war. The workers will find themselves compelled to combine together to change the basis of society. What resistance may be offered by the present dominant classes who can say? But I know that it must be futile.

ONE LAST WORD

to my middle class hearers. It ought to be easy to you to study this question. When you have found, as you must do, that there are but two camps—the people and their masters, and that you must take your choice between them. Will you hesitate then? To shut your eyes against reason then and to join the camp of the masters is to brand yourself as an oppressor and a thief. Throw in your lot with the workers. So doing

you will be part of a great army which must triumph, and be helping to bring about the day when the words rich and poor that have so long cursed the world shall have no meaning; when we shall all be friends and good fellows united in that community of happy, reasonable, honoured labour, which alone can produce genuine art or the pleasure of life." (Loud cheers.)

Never before had the lecture room of the Museum rung with such an inspiring indictment and appeal to "laugh not, but listen—to join in the only battle wherein no man can fail."

Next morning Morris took breakfast with three local workmen, socialist comrades—a shoemaker, a clerk, and a wire worker.

Meantime a Liberal defender of capitalism, the editor of the *Bristol Evening News*, appears to have considered his duty to the existing order, and two days later added a few words in a leading article—read!

"The well-dressed and well-to-do people who assembled must have come away with the impression that socialism with the author of *The Earthly Paradise* is a very thorough-going affair.

"... Curiosity, no doubt, prompted most of them to see and hear the poet-apostle of socialism.

"As for the sum total of Mr. Wm. Morris's lecture it only deserves to be described as pernicious nonsense; none the less pernicious because it was worded in the elegant language of a gentleman, and none the less nonsense because its theories were disguised in the high sounding phrases of a scholar.

"He exposes himself to the just rebuke of all reasonable men by his exaggerated and mischief-making language."

But the socialists, unperturbed, with Morris, sang:

"... this at least we know,
That the dawn and the day is
coming,
And forth the banners go!"

CANON KINGSLEY.

Before giving an account of J. R. Macdonald's early association with the Bristol Socialists, two or three earlier incidents should not be overlooked—a visit, a letter, and a manifesto.

Chas. Kingsley, M.A., Canon of Chester, who has been described as "the novelist-preacher and pioneer of Christian Socialism, whose work for democracy gained him the title of the Chartist Parson," visited the Broadmead Rooms on October 18th, 1871. In his day and generation he did much to direct thought towards Socialism and wielded an immense influence for good. By plain speaking and writing he laid bare the false conceptions of society that pertained, and gave expression to the inert aspirations of the poverty stricken multitudes. The story he wrote of *Alton Locke* was a specially strong appeal to face facts, and there are few finer lines than his verses describing the outburst and anguish of *The Poacher's Widow*, with its exposure also, of the misdirected charity of the rich that dealt with effects whilst ignoring causes. "Ted" Hobbess recited them with telling effect at several public meetings of the Bristol Socialists a quarter-century or so ago.

Kingsley's mission to Bristol, however, was not directly to preach socialism, but to distribute prizes, medals and certificates to the successful students of the Association for the promotion of Evening Classes in the city. The essence of his long speech was that it was a great pleasure to be with them that evening. It gave him great hope that the world was growing a little better in his own time. When a man had passed the grand climacteric and felt himself going down hill, he was a little tempted to think that the world was going down hill too, and seeing the new forms of good around him it was difficult for him to estimate them, but he had some solid reason for thinking that the world, at all events in Bristol, had grown a little better. He was a schoolboy in Bristol about the year 1830-1. At that time such a gathering as this was impossible. Bristol had grown wiser and had discovered the golden truth that no man can possibly know too much for the short time he was on this planet—he should have joy in doing the things well that he was fitted to do best. The work that a man does voluntarily was the work that he knew best; what a man loved best was what he sacrificed most for.

It was an encouraging address for youth, and gained much applause.

Mr. Lewis Fry occupied the chair, and the Rev. Prebendary Percival read the report.

In presenting the awards, Canon Kingsley said he was glad to see a long list of those who had distinguished themselves in music. Could he have known that three of the young prizewinners were also to become prominent exponents of the Socialist ideal in the city (as was the case—see p. 20) it would, doubtless, have been an added pleasure to him. But there is reason to think the civic dignitaries present would not have shared this feeling. Witness a letter from the City Librarian (John Taylor) dated August 8th, 1884:

"The Committee express their thanks for your kind offer of *The Christian Socialist*, but prefer to decline it, as they believe that the principle of accepting periodicals without due request from readers to be contrary to the regulations and interests of the libraries."

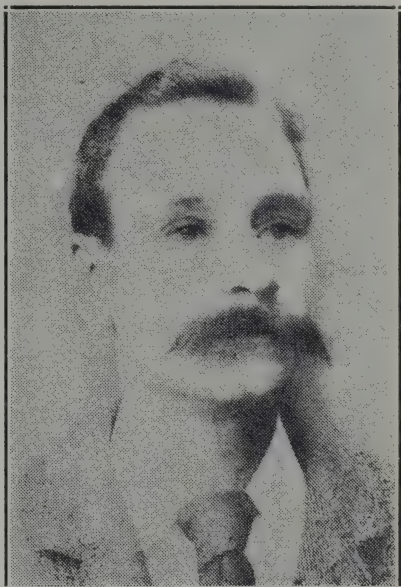
THE MANIFESTO.

A Manifesto was compiled and issued by the Bristol Branch of the Democratic Federation in April, 1884, to "Fellow Workers," signed by H. G. Jefferis and Robt. Sharland (Hon. Secretary and Treasurer respectively).

"We earnestly appeal to you to join us in endeavouring to establish equitable conditions to live and labour under. . .

"We are agitating for Adult Suffrage; every man and woman should have their electoral right to sanction the making of all laws which we have to support and obey. There should be paid delegates . . . executing the will of the people.

"... Our labour provides the means of existence for all, and life to us should be beautiful, comfortable and happy. Why, amidst the abundance of wealth (see foot notes) which our labour has produced, should want and misery exist? Remember it is not from any lack of wealth that this continues, but because there is no justice, or social order in its distribution. The general complaint is "over production," that means too much wealth, whilst the workers who produce it live in slums, are ill-clad and without the common necessities of life . . . they and their families suffer for the criminal act of producing too much



J. WATTS TREASURE

(Fearless in freedom's cause from '84).

wealth, whilst at the same time they are in the greatest need of it themselves. Can anyone say that such a state as this is right or just?

"The present must be superseded by a more righteous system of production and distribution of wealth; there should be collective ownership of land, machinery and all means of production and distribution, and all departments organised on co-operative principles, and worked for the people's benefit, and hours of labour reduced, and for ever end this slavery, competing for bare subsistence. . .

"Rouse from your apathy . . . make this truly OUR COUNTRY, with means of living sure, and having homes with pleasant social surroundings for ourselves and children

"Educate! Agitate! Organise!

"Total annual production of the United Kingdom ... £1,300,000,000

Taken by Landlords and Capitalists .. £1,000,000,000
Left for Producers... £300,000,000"

The special significance of this Manifesto is in the fact that it openly advocated Socialism six months prior to the Democratic Federation nationally declaring for it.

J. RAMSAY MACDONALD'S LIFE AND WORK IN BRISTOL.

Just over a year ago the *Western Daily Press*, in a reference to Mr. J. Ramsay Macdonald, queried whether he came to Bristol as a student at University College, but that was not the case.

It was in the summer of 1885, at the age of eighteen, that he first left his parents' roof in Scotland to take up an appointment to which he had been recommended in Bristol. It was in connection with a Boys' and Young Men's Guild that was then being started in Queen's Square, in which the Rev Mordaunt Crofton, of St. Stephen's Church, was interested. The club itself continued for several years, but is not now in existence, having closed a decade or two ago, and the reverend gentleman has since left his earthly abode and joined his fathers and the majority in peaceful rest.

The post did not prove of so long duration to Macdonald as he expected, and what the Labour Movement or he himself may have to thank for the fact that at this stage of his life he found himself in one of the very few places where there was a centre of Socialist activity, none can say.

From published records of his life prior to this time it is known that the home of his boyhood was a tiny cottage of two rooms in Lossiemouth, and at the age of eight he went daily to the neighbouring village school of Drainie, of which, when twelve, he was "top." Then, because of poverty, he had to leave school to work in the fields "lifting tattie," but the dominie arranged for him to return as a pupil teacher.

In the schoolhouse every morning for an hour before the other boys arrived, the master taught him all he could, but, after a time, the pupil began to look in other directions. He obtained the periodical numbers of *Cassell's Popular Educator*, and *Science for All*. These set him dreaming of a career studying and teaching science. Henry George's *Progress and Poverty*, however, beckoned another way, and he followed. The schoolmaster had misgivings and counselled caution; but other books were read, and yet others, including Joynes' monthly *Christian Socialist*.

At Bristol he found the meeting place of the local branch of the S.D.F., met the members, and de-

cided to stay for a time in the city. An upper room was found for him in Franklyn Street, St. Paul's, looking out over a near-by lane, and opposite the home of one of the socialist comrades. This individual and his wife in moments of extreme confidence have told of the strong love that existed between the "lad" and his home, of the loving letters that passed between that room and Lossiemouth, and of the unbounded delight of "Mac." when he received a parcel from mother. There never were goodies like those mother made, and every cake brought visions of her and her spotless kitchen; whilst "the cream of Devon" was incomparable with the butter from Scotland, the taste of which seemed to take him straight back to the fields, the cows, and the fertile farms of his native county. The response to home influence was wonderful.

These comrades also spoke of him as a bonnie, lovable lad, the embodiment of health and merriment. It was before the days of cinemas or other cheap forms of entertainment, and the poorer citizens had to create at home their own diversions from the daily work. Frequently he ran to the house across the street to pass many mutually pleasant hours in quiet games of cards, etc., and, above all, in talks about the new gospel of hope for the world's redemption.

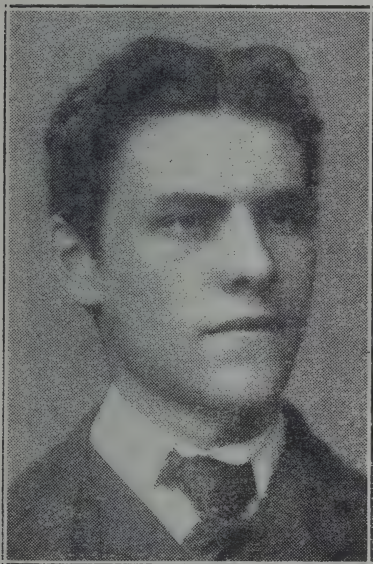
Like every other visitor to the Branch meetings, he was very heartily welcomed, not for scriptural reasons, but that every new face was either that of a fellow Socialist or a potential convert. Macdonald placed himself in the former category by joining the branch, and a right good comrade he proved to be. Heart and soul he entered into the work of the branch, and although all the members were impressed by his zeal, probably none detected in him a future Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary; albeit he gave many evidences of discernment, loyalty, ability, purposefulness and enthusiasm.

FAVOURITE QUOTATION.

The "favourite quotation" which he contributed to the Bristol Socialist Society's *Libertie Fayre Souvenir Birthday Book* (1911) was as characteristic of him as a youth of 18 as it was then at 44, and to-day at

62: "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might."

Edward Carpenter gave the branch a donation of £5, and it was thought fitting to spend most of it on books to begin a "library." Macdonald readily consented to become librarian. A case for the books was requisite, and, typical of socialist enthusiasm, a comrade volunteered to make it. Being engaged at piece rates he took the job to "shop," and



J. RAMSAY MACDONALD
(taken just after he left Bristol).

so much time was put in on it that at the end of the week the wages due from his employers for work done for them was only eight shillings—a princely sum for the wife to housekeep on. The women's share of sacrifice must never be forgotten.

The purchase of the books was left to "the librarian"; he had the pleasure of reading them and making their selection. He left it a model of precision, books covered, numbered and catalogued, and their issue and return methodically arranged. On the same evening as he undertook this duty he participated in a discussion on means of increasing the local sales of *Justice*, and suggested that in communica-

tion to Headquarters, "We should express our satisfaction at the improvement in the tone of *Justice*, and also our desire that it should continue to rise higher and higher in tone."

FREE SPEECH.

During the same month he proposed a resolution, which the branch unanimously adopted:

"That this meeting strongly condemns the arbitrary action of the London Police and Authorities in their recent attempts to suppress open-air meetings, and views with alarm the efforts to suppress free speech and public meeting."

This refers to the "Dod Street" incident.

For some time past the Social-Democrats had, on Sundays, held open-air meetings at the corner of a dull street in Limehouse, shadowed by tall warehouses, but free of traffic. It was a "scandal" the police decided to stop and forbade the meetings. Huge determined crowds of as many as 50,000 people assembled in support of speakers whose stentorian voices almost shook the gates of the West India Docks, and told all concerned that East London chose to act on its right to freedom of speech and of public open-air assembly. The Socialists of London were united in this fight, the public were aroused to a high pitch of enthusiasm, and it ended in the meetings being allowed to proceed.

On October 1st, '85, he gave a public lecture at 58 West Street on the subject of "Malthusianism v. Socialism," which the secretary, Robert Weare, summarised: "The lecturer in a lucid and interesting manner compared the two doctrines, and pointed to the powerlessness of Malthusianism to remove the evils by which we are surrounded, while by the adoption of Socialist principles the misery could be stamped out."

In the recently commenced open-air propaganda he did his best as a speaker and otherwise, in conjunction with the other comrades—"apprentice days" though they were for all of them!

Other incidents could be mentioned but more than enough has been quoted to show what a useful member and good comrade "the young lad" proved to be.

During his stay in Bristol he was particularly interested in the geology of the district. A keen "fossil hunter," he visited many neighbouring places in search of specimens, and numerous walks were taken to Dundry—shanks' pony all the way—trams helped but little and there were no buses. Specimens, moreover, were heavy to carry, but a light heart knows no load, and always haversacks as well as note and sketch books were well filled.

Most of these excursions were in company with local comrades and friends—interested "pals"—and on the subject of geology he wrote an essay for private circulation.

When he left the city the hearty thanks of the branch for the service he had rendered were conveyed to him by letter and recorded in the minutes.

HIS OWN WORDS.

Of these days, Macdonald wrote many years later in the *Labour Leader*:

"I sought out the apostles of the new creed. In a little, obscure newspaper shop I heard of them, and I was told they would be present at a certain meeting, and I went forth to see them. Thus did I meet the two Bobs—Bob Weare and Bob Sharland. Then came the formal welcome to the stranger who had strayed into their midst. We had all the enthusiasm of the Early Christians in those days. We were few and the gospel was new. Thus in the happy virgin days of the S.D.F., I wandered in the region of the Bristol Prison" (Lawford's Gate) "seeking a certain coffee house where the ceremony into full-blown membership of the S.D.F. was to take place. I found it at last. There was something exotic about it. The odour of saw-dust and steaming coffee, the long wooden staircase, the dimly-lit small upper room with the hard penitential forms, impressed the novice with a sense of awe and expectation. That coffee shop was a cathedral, and its odours were the smells of sacrifice which were being offered up by Demos. A paper on 'Ruskin,' to a small audience, was read" (by the third 'Bob'—Gilliard)—"and thus I became a full-blown Social Democrat."

Let published records conclude—"When Macdonald returned to

Lossiemouth from Bristol, he started a Local Democratic Federation.

"In the following year he was in London, penniless and unaccompanied, looking for a job. He paced the streets and turned from many a door disappointed. Envelope addressing was one of the first jobs he obtained, then a situation as warehouse clerk with a firm in the city. The wage was but 12/6 a week but he managed to rub along on that and spent his lunch hour in the Guildhall Library. Evenings were devoted to study—reading and thinking."

THE UNIVERSITY.

A child of the people, from the school of poverty he graduated in the university of struggle against adverse circumstances. From actual personal experience he gained more knowledge of the real lives, hardships and handicaps of the masses than is in the power of Oxford or Cambridge to impart. It brought him to realise—these words are from his book on *Socialism*:

"... that economic sovereignty cannot be safely left to individuals, but should belong to society organised, so that by a system of co-operative industrial effort the individual may be freed from the possibility of economic slavery, and may share in the benefits which increasing economic advantage brings."

And... "to labour for the establishment of the State where life alone will be valued as treasure, and the tyranny of the economic machine will no longer hold spiritual things in subjection. That State I call Socialism."

LABOUR LEAGUE.

On May 6th, 1885, the Bristol Trades Council circulated a stirring letter to "Fellow workmen," signed on behalf of the Council by:

Alfred Harris, President,
John Gregory, Vice-President,
George Belsten, Secretary,

Provisional Committee,
submitting "that it is advisable to at once create a great 'Local Labour League'... Is it not time to be astir? Look! and what do you see? Hark! and what do you hear? You see in the near future the long-refused deliverance of right to two millions of your fellow workmen, you hear the voice of progress crying 'rest not. On! Forward, for further freedom.' We want the

toilers of the town to fraternise with the long-neglected land tillers. Though at present we may not be able to run successfully a candidate for Parliament, let us up and take hold of the places that are within our reach at our Local Boards."

To further this a meeting was held at the Star Coffee House on June 25th, 1885, the minutes of which and of many that followed were written by John Gregory in bouquets of unusual phrases and words that might well have been gathered from the shoemaker-poet's 'garden'—*My Garden and Other Verses*—thus:

"Responding to an address issued by the Trades Council of this city on the question of direct Labour Representation, an influential company of working men met to discuss the advisability of creating a local Labour League. By the unanimous voice of the assembly Mr. Alfred Harris was called to the presidential chair. After his able introduction of the business, the following proposition, moved by John Gregory and seconded by Mr. Bateman, was universally adopted:

"That this meeting fully agree in the opinion that a local Labour League is an imperative necessity; that no time is so opportune as the present; and that this meeting do at once proceed to form ourselves into an association."

"It was then proposed by Mr. Belsten, seconded by Mr. Pritchett, and supported by Mr. Marshall, that the title of the Society should be The Bristol and District Labour League.

"The following were elected its first officials:

President—Alfred Harris.

Vice-President—W. Saunders.

Financial Secretary—Geo. Belsten.

Corresponding Secretary—

John Gregory.

Treasurer—J. D. Marshall.

"At least one shilling per annum" it was agreed "should be the amount paid by every member of the league."

Discussions at the next few meetings of ways, means, rules, etc., revealed that while these men had taken a big forward step in industrial politics, and were evidently class conscious, they were by no means socialists. In some respects their outlook was quite narrow. They adopted a rule confining membership to persons who work for

weekly wages and such others who from their work and antecedents may be considered working men in the general acceptance of that word. A qualifying rule providing for the admission to membership of other than wage earners in special circumstances was unanimously rejected, "though," says the minutes, "it was evident from the expression of several speakers that they thought some chance should be given for receiving help from true friends who were not working men."

UNWELCOME WOMEN.

Another, and in the light of 1929, a much more incredible decision, was arrived at in the following April (1886). Robert Gilliard had been asked to draft a "manifesto" for publication, explaining the aims and objects of the League, which he submitted to "a special assembly of members," and one sentence declaring that female workers might become members was voted out after considerable discussion!

The "grand object" of the association was unanimously declared as "The universal looking after and protection of that interest which labour has at stake in the Councils of all governing bodies whether local or parliamentary. To secure a direct representation of Labour in the Council Chamber of the city, among the Guardians of the Poor, at the School Board sittings, and also ultimately in the Imperial Parliament of the kingdom."

FIRST ELECTORAL FIGHT.

The 'workers' of the Labour League evidently knew how "to get on with their job!" for after only six months' existence it was decided "without a single objector" to run a candidate for the School Board. Mr. John Fox, the general secretary of the Bristol Trade and Provident Society, was asked, and addressing the members (at New Street Coffee Tavern, January 2nd, 1886), he accepted the invitation as a Labour candidate. He said, "He had no wish to fight this contest exclusively upon the educational aspect, yet from the standpoint of a Labour candidate he held very strong views upon the education question. He was a firm advocate of compulsory education. He believed in free education. It should be paid for out of the national exchequer. He was

a religious man, but believed that our boys and girls should get their religion at home or at the Sunday School, and not from those who might be, and probably in many cases were, opposed in ideas and habits to what they were compelled to teach. He would have the time which is taken up by what is called religious education devoted to something more practical, such as swimming or something that would be of real benefit." (Applause.)

Robert Gilliard was appointed secretary, and J. D. Marshall treasurer to the Election Committee. To raise money, books of penny tickets were issued for sale, and an electoral campaign which provided for indoor meetings in all parts of the city was planned, also was a trap hired to drive round to various "open airs."

Meanwhile the Conservative and Liberal parties were arranging between themselves the disposition of seats on the Board, and the possibility of the Labour Candidate going to the poll was ridiculed. To dispel any doubt, Mr. Fox's committee lodged the nomination papers a day earlier than necessary, and an announcement of it appeared in the evening newspapers. It was a new phase of politics that had begun, and unusual events followed during the next ensuing days.

Fox's nomination papers were signed by Geo. Belsten (Secretary, Trades Council), and Albert Vincent; Robt. Gray Tovey (Clothiers' Cutters' Association), and J. Sainsbury; Geo. Higgins, and Samuel Edwards (Trade and Provident Society), and the candidature was a shock to the orthodox parties who did all they could to discount it.

The *Mercury* reported, "arrangements had been made which would admit Mr. Fox to the School Board and avoid a contest," but the Labour League were not parties to any such arrangement, neither were they cognisant of it.

"Casually," Mr. Fox was met by a prominent member of the old Board who referred to the election and gave the impression of a desire to compromise, hinting at Mr. Fox's withdrawal on an understanding that he should fill the first vacancy arising; but Fox assured him the League would not agree. That was on Saturday evening. On Monday the secretary (Robt. Gilliard) was asked to meet a prominent Liberal, a Mr.

Thomas. At first he said it would be better to have any communication in writing, but consented to give him "five or ten minutes" in the afternoon. Of this interview Gilliard wrote a lengthy report and read it to the League members at the time. The document is still in the archives and these are its salient points.

AN UNUSUAL INTERVIEW.

"The 'gentleman' called and said a good deal about the desirability of avoiding the turmoil, worry and expense of an election, about how well the present members served the city, of the great amount of time it took up, and so forth; that a prominent Rev. nonconformist would perhaps be lost to the Board, and laid much stress upon the great loss that would be, and without his at all asking for the withdrawal of our candidate, it was plainly to be gathered that this was what it meant." The humorous side of it struck Gilliard, who ejaculated, "Well! if that isn't the coolest suggestion that ever was made in an electioneering matter! I don't know, sir, whether this is a specimen of the wire-pullers of the Liberal Party. You do not even make an offer—not that we should accept any offer whatever." Mr. Thomas replied that he had no power to make an offer, and now perceiving Gilliard's intense appreciation of the comic aspect of the situation suggested that "perhaps the proposal would not appear so ridiculous to the committee." "Possibly not," was the answer, "but I can assure you that if there be any danger of their not seeing the thing in its true light, it will not be for any want of effort on my part. Why, sir, if you could imagine the years of heart-sick struggle it has been to some of Mr. Fox's supporters, a struggle extending over years, to get the working classes where they are now; if you knew the amount of work that some have for their whole life bestowed on this one object; imagine the sleepless nights, the toil and energy involved in the last few weeks to convince the working classes of their strength, and afterwards convince you of it; and then imagine your proposal brought to them whilst they are on the eve of success (and our canvass books would prove to you that we are). I think if you imagine this you will not fail to see it in its true light yourself.

NO GOING BACK.

"No, sir, there is not the ghost of a chance of our withdrawing our man. He is going in, and let me tell you as emphatically as I can that from this day forward the working men of Bristol will have to be consulted in these matters. We are not fighting this election for merely a seat on the School Board—that is important enough we know; but we are determined that a principle shall be planted on that Board which will strongly protest against the domination of the so-called upper classes over the working class—a protest against that which has brought the workers to the fearful state in which we to-day find them. This is a precursor of greater things, the workers have at last awakened to the fact that to be shuttlecock between the Tory and Liberal battledores is not endurable any longer, and it is as well to take warning now that Labour for the future must not be ignored."

As the talk proceeded, Gilliard emphasised the essential difference between the League's outlook and that of the Liberals, and with polite "Good-days" the interview closed, Mr. Thomas' last words being, "then I understand you will kindly do as you have said—I am very much obliged—but it must not be taken that we came begging to you, we don't do that. I am very glad to have had this conversation with you."

RESULT AND LESSON.

Three days later the Liberals withdrew one of their nominees (Miss Tribe) and thus the Labour League's first candidate was returned to the Bristol School Board unopposed!

Gilliard's report concluded: "This is an account of the main features of that interview, remarkable from the fact (although the party concerned by no means came to us begging—of course not!—their cool request was not of a begging nature) that they should have come to us at all, and it, and the result of the firm part shown in it, only anticipates what mountains we may eventually move if we only have that smallest amount of faith in one another sufficient to organise for our common welfare."

In Gilliard's socialist mind the ever-present thought was that Lab-

our would have to be its own emancipator in opposition to Liberals and Tories alike—he anticipated "Cissy."

Fortunate, indeed, was the young movement in having a secretary so farseeing and firm.

WORKING MEN MAGISTRATES.

The Labour League's next move (February, 1886) was to obtain working class representation on the magisterial bench, and to this end the co-operation of the Trades Council and the Liberal operatives was invited, but the latter body showed no enthusiasm, so the two Labour organisations decided to proceed by themselves. It took a year to prepare the memorial to the Lord Chancellor, submit names, and bring the matter to a head, when an interesting outcome resulted and which will be reported later.

HARD TIMES.

The poverty and privation of the people was added to in the winter of '85/'86 by a period of bad trade and unemployment to which the Labour League and Socialist Society directed the attention of the Mayor and Corporation, but both bodies expressed considerable resentment at the attitude adopted by the authorities.

In a public letter the Mayor wrote that there was nothing exceptional in the amount of suffering or any distress in excess of that which prevailed in other winters. This the socialists "indignantly repudiated," "being assured it is a patent error, and that the Poor Law returns are only indicative of the braver and more independent spirit of men—that they would rather die, as they are doing, than become paupers."

In the same week a Labour League speaker, Mr. Saunders, said it was a question in some quarters in Bristol, whether there was any distress in the city, and it was suggested that an enquiry should be made as to the extent of it if it existed, but he thought it better by far if their would-be benefactors—he referred to a proposal which it was understood had been made that subscriptions should be started for relieving distress—would deal with the evident and widespread distress which they saw, than to waste time enquiring whether it existed, which reflected suspicion on the genuineness of the desire to relieve it.

John Gregory said at this same meeting :

"He had made a computation of his own wages and for a large number of weeks until recently his wages had not reached an average of 3/7 per week; not that he was unemployed during this time for he had to be at his shop waiting and waiting for work like a fisher at a stream waiting for a bite. He knew plenty who earned less than himself, and taking the summer months through, their wages did not average 14/- a week. But his trade would not beg, they for the time being would bear that which they ought not to bear, and rather than Lazarus who sat at the rich man's gate should submissively accept the crumbs from the rich man's table, when they were offered as they were now, he, for one, (and he knew hundreds of others also) would advise Lazarus to hold up his crutches and defiantly disdain the rich man's so-called charity." (Loud and repeated applause.)

Mr. S. W. Pritchett added, "The working classes were now demanding justice and not seeking charity. They required to be given the opportunity to work and to be justly paid for it when they had done it."

THE MAYOR'S REMEDY.

The socialists organised public meetings of the unemployed on the Ropewalk, one of which was addressed by Mr. C. Fitzgerald (of London), and besides suggesting the opening of a Labour Registry, various proposals were made for amelioration of the conditions. At one of the meetings a deputation was appointed to wait upon the Mayor, who, after some formalities, duly received them in his parlour at the Council House. According to their spokesman, the Mayor's reception was genial but quite without hope. After explaining that the City Council had no power to adopt the deputation's suggestions, he joined in general conversation, and expressed the view that the prevailing distress was due to foreign competition—unless some measures were taken to adopt a policy of protection in this country he saw no alternative but for the British workers to meet the competition of the continent where workers worked longer hours for lower pay.

Mr. Wathen was a free trader, so the deputation summed up the in-

terview as a request to work longer hours for lower pay, but the Mayor protested that this was a gross misrepresentation!

Speaking at a public meeting, H. H. Gore urged that it was better to steal than to starve. This statement caused an outburst amongst the comfortably off, who strongly condemned it as highly immoral; but Gore issued a leaflet justifying his words on the high ground of jurisprudence—it was the citizen's duty to the state to see that he kept in a condition of good health and efficiency.

POTHOUSE POLITICIANS!

Blunt speaking had become the order of the day in all quarters, but some of the members of the old political parties quite forgot themselves. During discussion by the Docks Committee of a matter urged by working class bodies, Mr. W. Pethick sneeringly referred to the agitation as carried on by "pothouse politicians." This phrase was resented, and at a meeting of the Labour League, March 23rd, 1886, Mr. Saunders urged taking steps "to insist upon the statement being withdrawn within a month." Mr. A. Harris (the chairman) said it was a matter of considerable concern that those who go to the Town Council to represent them could think it justifiable to bring such unfounded charges against them. . . . Until recent years places were so few where working men could meet together without paying certain sums beyond their means, that they had no alternative but to go to public houses for the purpose, but since coffee houses had been established, working men had eagerly availed themselves of these places. The Trades Council's deputation was composed of total abstainers. Mr. R. G. Tovey thought the objectionable charge would be beneath their notice if it had not come from one considered to stand high in the Liberal Party. It was nothing but right and proper that the Labour League should insist upon the withdrawal of the accusation. A letter was accordingly sent to Mr. Pethick, and at a later meeting John Gregory reported receipt of a reply from which his inference was "that the Labour League were not the persons to whom the words were intended to apply"; but this was considered unsatisfactory as it

was known that the Trades Council and other protesting bodies were in receipt of similar replies!

ETERNAL VIGILANCE.

Official interference with the right of public open-air meetings, and freedom of speech, was apparent in several towns early in '86. Champion, Burns, Hyndman, and Williams all answered charges of "seditious conspiracy" in London, but an Old Bailey jury acquitted them. New bye-laws for the regulation of Public Parks, mooted by the Bristol City Council, were therefore viewed with suspicion by the local socialists, who, recognising eternal vigilance as the price of liberty, sent Robt. Weare, J. Moule, T. Collings, and R. Sharland to see the Town Clerk, lest a new enactment be perpetrated infringing established and hard-won rights. It transpired that nothing prejudicial was proposed, but this act warned the authorities of the presence of a body determined to see that no curtailment of the people's liberties in these directions was permissible.

A LABOUR PAMPHLET.

Inviting membership, the names and addresses of the secretaries with meeting places of the central body and four branches (St. Philip's North, and South, St. Paul's and district, and West Bedminster) were given in a four-page pamphlet issued by the Labour League in April, '86. Drawn up by Robt. Gilliard and amended by members, it explained in a clear and forceful way the purpose and outlook of the League:

"... The Bristol and District Labour League is the outcome of a determination that the present state of things shall not continue. Its first object is ... that all public bodies, local and Parliamentary, shall be thoroughly democratised. ... Its chief efforts are directed to getting intelligent working men on these bodies.

"Among the particular lessons it enforces is that for working men to accept the social or political patronage of the upper and middle classes is the greatest degradation that can be submitted to, and is nothing less than a venal prostitution of their liberties. For them to willingly receive the so-called charitable alms and doles from these classes is equivalent to selling their birthright for



J. PERCIVAL JONES

(Bristol's workman composer of nearly thirty original musical compositions for Socialist Songs, etc. Died 1921).

a mess of pottage. It further teaches and shows that the so-called laws of political economy, which result in the poverty of the poorest man setting the rate of wages for his class—laws which condemn by far the largest portion of the civilised human race to eternal slavery, that the few may be kept in ease, luxury, elegance, pre-eminence, arrogance, and pride, are fallacious, unjust and monstrous laws. That any laws which do not result in a moral and material recognition of the dignity of labour and the nobleness of the labourer, and at the same time the degradation of the idler and lout, are based upon altogether false principles, and therefore, truly considered, are not laws at all.

"The League interferes with no man's creed. It seeks the injury of no one, but the good of all. It excludes no honest working-man, but is purely and simply an effort, by fraternity of interest, to extend to each and all such equality of opportunity in life as shall secure to them that absolute unshackled liberty which belongs to them of right, by

which alone the vast capacities of humanity may be opened up and developed to their fullest measure, and life, instead of being the burden it is to millions at present, shall in the near future become truly worth living to all living it.

"This movement is not made in any spirit of revenge against the upper classes. The new democracy will deserve to fail, and certainly will fail as woefully as the old autocracy has done, and fall to pieces as that is doing, if its object be any other than Justice, and the embodiment of the golden rule in our laws and institutions, public, social, and moral affairs. Forgiveness of the past must therefore be the democratic watchword, coupled with a fiery determination that for the future, that order of things which would warrant one section of humanity grinding another to death shall cease to be.

"The League affords every working man an opportunity to help himself, his children, his fellows, his country, and the world. No man's poverty need exclude him. The League is worked on entirely voluntary principles."

TREATMENT OF DOCKERS.

A press notice of a meeting of the League on May 18th, '86, reports remarks of John Gregory:

"That some months ago the Bristol Trades Council had under discussion the question of the Docks Committee having decreased the wages of the working men in their employ whilst they were increasing the salaries of Mr. Girdlestone, the engineer, and other dock officials; and had written the Docks Committee asking them to receive a deputation from the Trades Council on the matter, but the committee declined to receive them."

"It was only last week that the representations of another deputation of working men backed up by a large public meeting were absolutely sneered at by the Town Council. (Shame.)"

"If these two events were not enough to stir up the working classes to action nothing would do so, but he believed they would, and as base, contemptible and absolutely evil as this treatment was, good would come out of it for the working classes, as it showed up the authorities in their true light. He

felt that by these 'incidents' a torch had been put into the hands of himself and others by which they could fire the indignation of the down-trodden working men, and instil them with a determination to look after their class so that the present abominations should soon cease to be possible." (Loud and continued applause.)

Others followed in a similar strain, and a resolution was unanimously adopted:

"... Strongly protesting against the high-handed discourtesy of the Bristol Docks Committee. . ."

ACTION AND PROPAGANDA.

Unquestionably the Labour League was a very live body, and its members met frequently to consider matters affecting the working class—it devoted a lot of attention and had considerable correspondence with authorities on the question of artisan's dwellings—but it held few, if any, public meetings apart from electoral ones.

The Socialist Society, however, missed no opportunity for public propaganda. As a result of nearly three years of close study and mutual education they had gained confidence as public speakers, writers, and debaters, and now excelled in these spheres.

The names of Weare, J. Sharland, Gore, Gilliard, R. Sharland, Rogers, Watts-Treasure, Gregory, and Baster being specially prominent, and they were well supported by several others.

BRISTOL NORTH.

"With great enthusiasm" the Labour League decided, on June 2nd, '86, to take action towards Parliamentary representation, and adopted J. D. Marshall as candidate for the Bristol North Division. Marshall's address, "respectfully" to "gentlemen" was rather vague and did not postulate socialism. He advocated Irish Home Rule, abolition of the House of Lords, Local Self-Government, and an extensive measure of Land Reform. He promised "to resist with all my strength such expenditure as in various branches of the Service afford out-door relief to the sons of the aristocracy."

He appealed to "those who have got above the littleness of class interest, and in its stead are imbued with the spirit of universal brother-

hood of humanity—minds who from sympathy with their fellows, perceive the justness and necessity of Labour being directly represented by those who have in their own persons experienced the fearful struggle for existence which the working classes have to endure. It is, however, such of you as have been, and are, undergoing those trials—you, my fellow working men, upon whom I shall have mainly to rely.

"I would advocate that no Government should, on any account, make war without the consent of Parliament convened for the purpose, and that national disputes should be settled by arbitration, and I would support any policy that would effect or conduce to this end.

"If returned, it will be my effort, whilst demanding that justice be done to Labour to demand also that it be done all round; not only to all classes in England, but in all our transactions with other countries, and the numerous races comprised in our vast Empire."

Many encouraging meetings were held in the constituency, and moral support was not lacking; but at that time candidates had to bear *all* election expenses, including *returning officers' fees*, and for sheer lack of funds it was found impossible to go to the poll. But "the work lived," and the League prosecuted a fighting policy by making its first move for a seat on the City Council at the November election of the same year.

SAINT PAUL'S.

St. Paul's was the ward selected, and Robt. Gray Tovey of the Clothiers' Cutters' Association accepted the task assigned to him at a public meeting. He pluckily challenged the seat of the highest civic dignitary—Mr. Chas. Wathen, the Mayor.

The candidature roused the imagination of many working men who worked heart and soul in the contest. Mr. Tovey made it quite clear that he had no personal ambition for a seat on the Council and that his sole object, if returned, would be to give expression to working class views on matters dealt with by the Council, irrespective of the convenience or opinions of either the Liberal or Conservative parties. He advocated municipalisation of



Mr. R. G. TOVEY
(Bristol's first Labour Councillor,
St. Paul's Ward, 1887).

water, lighting and tramway undertakings, the abolition of unnecessary sub-letting of Corporation contracts, and the adoption of such honourable conditions of working municipal undertakings that members of good trades societies, such as the Society of Amalgamated Engineers, shall not be precluded as at present from accepting employment under the Corporation.

The fight waxed warm, and resulted in the Mayor's re-election by the narrow margin of 18 votes :

Wathen 584

Tovey 566

The result was a great fright to the old parties who could plainly read its portent. The press did its best to soften the blow by saying, "The smallness of the majority may safely be disregarded as any criterion of the estimation in which Mr. Wathen is held."

ST. PHILIP'S NORTH.

There was an eye-opener, too, for the politicians in the neighbouring ward of N. St. Philip's, where a middle class body, known as the Vivyan Society—from the fact that it originated and held its meetings at Vivyan Terrace, Clifton—which for some time past had taken interest in (as well as from) the working class, and had discussed and pro-

pagated advanced ideals of municipal progress (chiefly on the lines of municipalisation and enlightened treatment of employees) again nominated Mr. F. Gilmore Barnett as an independent candidate and wrested the seat from the official Liberals :

F. Gilmore Barnett 1,114

C. Garton 779

Mr. Barnett's sympathies were in Labour directions, and he did much good service in Labour's cause from time to time, both on the Council and elsewhere.

An active participator in this contest was W. J. Petherick, who for forty years afterwards continuously did magnificent work in the Labour, Socialist and Co-operative movements.

JUBILATION.

The next evening, at the usual League meeting, was a very large, enthusiastic attendance, and much jubilation was expressed on the "splendid victories." The chairman, Robt. Weare, said they "had to warmly congratulate one another . . . yesterday they had the Liberal and Conservative allied against them, the whole of the local press opposed to them, the money bags, and the parson; and . . . the effect of it was they had just been able to stand against it; next time, whenever it might come, the people's Party would be able to give a harder blow than their opponents had now received." (Applause.)

Mr. Tovey also spoke, and said, "Had the battle been fought as fairly on the other side as on their's, as manfully, openly and honestly, the League's candidate would have been successful. His opponent's paid canvassers had said he was an atheist and drunkard. These falsehoods had had a very detrimental effect on the result of the poll. . . In spite of this he was proud of the result of their work. . . The democracy was at last really taking these matters into its own hands." (Applause.)

The chairman of the St. Paul's Branch, Mr. Geo. Belsten, and others added their word, Mr. Alfred Harris (President of the Trades Council) saying, amid loud applause, "There will be no room for nondescript individuals who call themselves Liberals or Conservatives in municipal affairs."

With cheers, the League recorded its "warmest gratitude to Mr. R. G. Tovey and the St. Paul's Branch of the League for the manly and upright manner in which they have contested St. Paul's Ward, and our satisfaction with the result."

TREATMENT OF PRISONERS.

Another sidelight is thrown on the atmosphere prevailing in the eighties by this letter which appeared in the local press :

"Sir,—While waiting on Thursday last at the Montpelier Station for a train, I was horrified by a sight I shall ever remember. With me, and others, on the platform there awaited for the coming of the train a group of five women. This group was divided as follows: three of them were bound together by a heavy iron chain of, I should think, three yards in length. The other two were fettered in the same fashion. With them there was an officer in charge, and I have since heard that the five female prisoners were in course of transit from Horfield gaol to some other prison. I was astonished and shocked by the sight of these chains. What were their crimes? Was each of them a murderess, or why were they subjected to this unnecessary degradation and torture? To these questions I have no reply. I know that they were English women, and each of them, in the bonds of humanity, a suffering sister. I feel as if I would give much to forget the distressing spectacle. I have lived 56 years, and never have I heard that this England, "my native land," was a place where such repulsive abominations were possible. Was not the punishment to which these poor creatures were sentenced enough? What need was there for this extra and needless torment? I suppose the chains were used to save the trouble of a greater escort. There can be no other reason, and so the nation is disgraced for the sake of a trifling convenience. Four of the five unfortunates were evidently suffering silently the miseries of their hideous situation. The fifth, a more muscular being than either of her companions, lifting her manacled hands to the spectators, exclaimed, "This is for begging." Is it not a shame? I think that a stir in the matter should be made by influential citizens and that the Home

Secretary should be appealed to.

Begging that you will heartily aid in the discontinuance of this disgrace to our country,

I am, Yours respectfully,

JOHN GREGORY.

November 28th, 1886."

HENRY ROGERS.

In the month of March, 1887, the Socialist Society sent letters to the branches of the Liberal Operatives and Conservative Associations, to religious bodies and similar organisations where men were congregating, offering to give addresses on social affairs with a choice of subjects and speakers. This spirited propaganda had a natural response in lectures against socialism. One of them was held by the Liberals at Barton Hill, with a Mr. Hayward as speaker. Some socialists attended, and the same hall was taken for a reply lecture.

Henry Rogers gladly undertook this task. A working shoemaker, Rogers had a wide knowledge of the utopians, from Plato, Sir Thos. More, Saint Simon, Louis Blanc, Godwin, Robt. Owen, and the Chartists to modern idealists such as Ruskin and Kingsley. He knew all their teachings and was ever ready to leave his last, which often meant the losing of earnings he could ill afford, to speak at socialist meetings and help plant the seeds of these high ideals in the minds of his fellow workers. His addresses were always inspiring and educative, and a high value was placed on them by his socialist comrades, who forgave him for the opinion he ever—and wrongly—held, that the best way to realise "the glorious time to be" was by permeation of the Liberal Party!

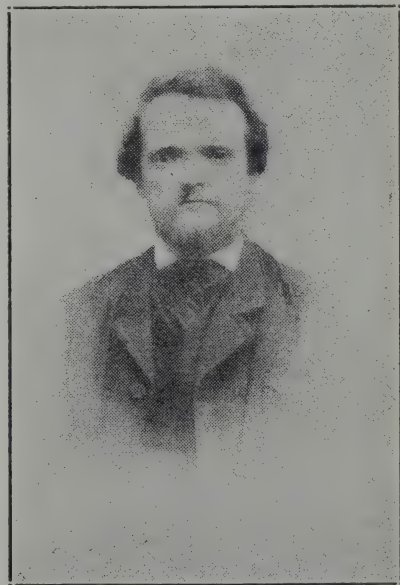
LABOUR'S PROPER STATION.

When sending the memorial to the Lord Chancellor for the addition of working men to the Magisterial Bench, the Trades Council and Labour League submitted the names of John Fox (Labour's School Board representative) and Albert Harris (President of the Trades Council). It was believed that nominations to the Chancellor were usually made by the political parties, so a copy was sent to the City Council at the same time. This was discussed at the February, 1887, Council Meeting and received a mixed reception.

Alderman Fox, after saying, "this Council had never considered it its sphere to interfere in the selection of magistrates," moved that the memorial lie on the table, and in seconding, Mr. H. G. Gardner rubbed it in: "The Bench required men of education and experience, and it would be very indiscreet to adopt the course proposed. Men of that class had better keep their place (hear, hear). Working men were toadied to a great deal too much, and their best friends were those who told them so (hear, hear, and laughter). They could not be governed much better than they were, and they ought to set their faces against turning things upside down."

Mr. W. Howell Davies' word was, "that it did not seem the right time to discuss the question. When the proper time arrived the claims of the working man would, he knew, have proper consideration."

Thus, in typical ways, the Tories and Liberals acted up to their traditions and came to the same conclusion. Said the former, "There must be no working men magistrates;" while the latter—more diplomatic—



HENRY ROGERS
(Socialist Lecturer in early '80's;
Authority on the Utopias.)

gave the cause lip service and then vetoed against it. To the Conservative 'not' the Liberals added 'now.' "NOT NOW." "Now" never was "the accepted time" for granting workers' demands, which, however, neither party dared refuse when the workers made their minds up and determined their claims should be allowed, but the nature of these capitalist parties is to "hoodwink" even then, if they can, and Labour has always had to be "on guard!"

Mr. F. Gilmore Barnett, Moss Levy, and a few others, spoke more favourably, and these (including Davies!) were publicly thanked by the League for their support, but many more years passed before the Bristol Bench was dignified by the presence of representatives of Labour.

CHRISTIAN SOCIALISTS.

To an increasing number of Christians of all demoninations the Socialist ideal appealed as an economic interpretation of Christ's ethical teaching.

One of the earliest of these was the Rev. T. W. Harvey, M.A. (Clifton College Missioner and first Vicar of St. Agnes') who became early associated with the Guild of St. Matthew, and the Church Socialist League, took part in the endeavour to call public attention to the plight of the unemployed, and the committee referred to him as "an example of what the Christ would have done if he had been among us." Later, on the Bristol Board of Guardians, he initiated great reforms and during his whole life fought unceasingly for the Kingdom of God upon earth.

E. D. Girdlestone, B.A., who had contributed an essay in condemnation of usury to *The Christian Socialist* as long previous as December, 1883, was early introduced to the Bristol movement by Ed. Carpenter, and was instrumental in starting the Society of "The Clifton and Bristol Christian Socialists." This body was very broad based and without theological test, affirmation of belief in the social teachings of Jesus being the only condition of membership. Meetings were held at Alexandra Hall, Merchants Road, Clifton, on Saturdays, the first being addressed by Girdlestone on "Christian Socialism," and later ones by H. H. Champion, Miss Emily Guest, Ed.

Carpenter, Ed. R. Pease, Rev. C. L. Marson, etc. They also held meetings at the Schoolroom, Upper Maudlin Street, and lecturers there included Laurence Gronland (author of *The Co-operative Commonwealth*), Henry Deacon, and Hy. Rogers. They published a 32 pp. booklet in '86 containing *'Thirty-nine articles of Belief*, proposed as the profession and programme of Christian Socialists' by 'one of them'; also a third edition, 'revised and enlarged' of Girdlestone's pamphlet, *Society Classified*, and both had a wide circulation.

H. H. Gore and Paul Stacey as hon. secretaries, signed a printed statement (1887):

"We, the Clifton and Bristol Christian Socialists, deem that our faith cannot be crystallised into a sentence or phrase.

"While it is common for folk to call themselves Christians, there are many enlisted under the Banner of Christ who really don't understand or don't care for Him one little bit. For instance, in the Kingdom of Heaven, which some of us pray may be realised on earth, commercial competition has no place, nor have rents or dividends; nor do the Children of the Kingdom go bargain hunting and trying to buy cheaply; nor do they measure worth by many-jewelled aureoles, nor by pedigree, nor fine raiment. Yet pedigree, rent, and interest on loans are somehow blindly tolerated by many who name the name of Christ.

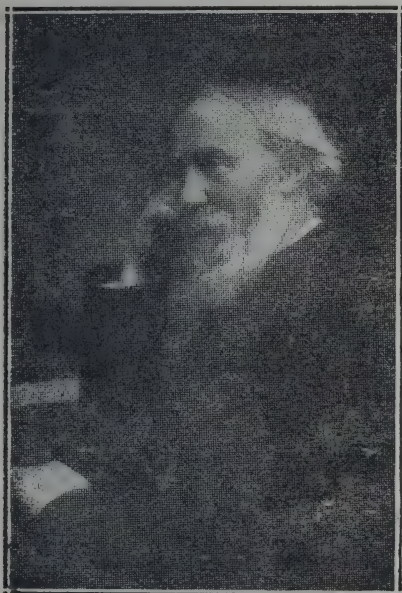
"What we aim at is a more real Faith which makes for integrity, when we lose our souls to find them, or to put it in more philosophic terms, when we realise self through self-renunciation.

"We want . . . economics according to Christ."

DIGNITY OF LABOUR.

An echo of the Republican teachings of political democrats (including the anti-socialists Jos. Chamberlain and Chas. Bradlaugh) which, it will be remembered, had considerable acceptance in Bristol, found expression when civic arrangements were being made to celebrate the jubilee of Queen Victoria's reign (1887).

Above the signatures of S. W. Pritchett, R. G. Tovey, R. Bishop, J. W. Pearce, Hugh Gore, J. W. D.



Rev. T. W. HARVEY
(St. Agnes', 1881—1900), Prophet and
Priest. Died, 1916).

Marshall, W. J. Petherick, R. S. Gilliard, E. Shurmur, J. Sharland, Robt. Weare, R. Sharland, and W. H. H. Dowling (hon. sec. of committee), two editions of a leaflet entitled *The Jubilee Humbug* were issued. It stated that "an organised attempt promoted by the aristocratic and middle classes of both political parties is being made to secure the co-operation of the working classes . . . to make the Jubilee Festivities a grand success and enable them to point to the enthusiasm of the workers thus engendered as evidence of the complete failure of all the agitation that has been directed against the privileged classes. . . .

"But believing that the good seed sown . . . has taken deep root, that large numbers of workers are dissatisfied with the social aspect of society . . . we ask all our brethren . . . to aid us in maintaining the dignity of labour. . . Stand in your own self respect . . . bow no knee to Mammon. Erect as men, aid us in protesting against the evils of the present system, its waste and injustice on Jubilee Day."

Very determined, for many days before "the day," in addition to holding two or three open air meetings, the committee met every night. The Labour Parliamentary and Municipal Candidates of the previous year both took part, and the sentiments expressed received much support from the assembled crowds.

Whilst R. G. Tovey was speaking at one of the meetings on the Rope-walk, the 28th regiment marched on to the ground in full uniform, colours flying, and a guard with fixed bayonets. As always, the soldiers of the Queen drew a big crowd of sightseers, most of whom went across to the meeting, which proved to be the largest and most successful held up to that date; but most of the committee firmly believed that the ill-timed appearance of the 1st Gloucesters was intended to provoke disorder and spoil the meeting.

LABOUR TRIUMPHANT!

Conscious of growing strength, the Labour League nominated S. W. Pritchett, in N. St. Philip's, and R. G. Tovey in St. Paul's at the next November Council Elections. The former attended divine service at a chapel off Stapleton Road. Chapel-goers were then mostly Liberal in politics, and Pritchett's nomination caused great consternation amongst some of his fellow worshippers, who, without apparently seeing anything incongruous in the fact, found themselves preferring a brewer to one of their own number. So bitter did the feeling become that Pritchett and one Radical member of the congregation actually came to blows outside the sacred meeting place!

Strenuous work was done by Labour's supporters, and the N. St. Philip's result was splendid:

C. Garton (Lib.)	995
S. W. Pritchett (Lab.)	.. 747

But St. Paul's was even better:

R. G. Tovey (Lab.)	... 418
*E. Follwell (Lib.)	392
H. W. Carter (Con.)	369

(Labour gain—majority 26).

*Retiring Councillor.

This election of Labour's first representative to the City Council caused unbounded delight and encouragement to the rising movement. A real jubilee celebration!

These contests were not conducted on the express lines of socialism, but the League represented the organised political movement of the working class and as such received the support of the socialists whose conception that sooner or later economic evolution (to say nothing of the socialists' own propaganda) would force the acceptance of the socialist objective, has been fully proven.

THE WINTER OF '87-'88

saw another serious spell of unemployment, and a vigorous agitation for work. A report of the Committee made responsible for the campaign was adopted at a public meeting held at the Giant's Castle Coffee Tavern, Bristol, on February 17th, 1888, and published. This document of 2,500 words reveals the despairing outlook to which the heartlessness of capitalism drove its authors, as the following extracts from it show :

"The public meetings of the unemployed which resulted in the appointment of this Committee," it says, "*insisted . . . that it was work the unemployed wanted, and not charity.* This has been the keynote of our action throughout."

"It was further determined that the agitation *should be peaceful and orderly*, a condition we have successfully kept; the manner in which the case of the unemployed in Bristol has been brought before public notice does credit to Bristol.

"We have to report that the treatment the movement has received from influential and wealthy Bristolians has not done equal credit to the city.

"There has been a manifest effort to discredit the cause from the beginning.

UNSYMPATHETIC AUTHORITIES.

"The first onslaught was made upon our secretary, on the occasion of our first interview with the Mayor. Thinking the Mayor had offered a slight to the unemployed in replying to a letter of his (the secretary's) in the third person, he ~~indicated~~ *insisted* on it at a public meeting prior to that interview. . . The Mayor took exception to those remarks, and stated that the secretary's conduct 'was a disgrace to working men.' Since that episode

several letters by His Worship to middle-class men on the same subject *are all in the first person*, thus showing unmistakably that in his opinion an invidious distinction is the thing in the case of men whose only fault is they are unemployed and in great distress.

"Subject to that incident, the deputation was cordially received; but what has occurred since has convincingly proved that there was a considerable deal of what Shakespeare terms "method" in the Mayor's action and courtesy.

"The personal character of the chairman of the Committee was assailed. . . The accusation . . . of an abominable nature, was traced to its source, fully disproved, and the disapproval published.

"Then the Mayor questioned the genuineness of the reports sent to the newspapers, strangely quoting in proof of his position from a report which had never been "sent" to the newspapers at all. The truthfulness of the reports communicated by the Committee and other working-men's organisations was well defended by Mr. Tovey. A conference between ourselves and some influential gentlemen endeavoured to get some accurate knowledge of the number out of employ by depositing lists for signature in nine different centres for seven days. Some 1,300 persons signed these sheets.

"The Mayor had a shorthand writer present at the interview 'because of the most exaggerated and untruthful statements following the deputation to him on a former occasion.' And oh! strange fact, the very first quotation from that shorthand writer's notes (on being compared with the report in the *Western Daily Press*) proved to be false! Well did Mr. Tovey say if matters went on thus 'he must have his shorthand writer, too.'

"Efforts have been made to get His Worship to point out the 'exaggerated and untruthful statements,' but, judging from his silence, he has been unable to do so. His specific for solving the great unemployed question is, we understand, that men and women must 'WORK LONGER HOURS FOR LESS PAY.' He is truly an ill-used man if anything worse than *that* has been said of him.

"We have no hesitation in saying that his treatment gives us a firm

conviction that at the bottom there was not the slightest sympathy on his part with the condition of the unemployed.

HOPE AND DESPAIR.

"The Rev. T. W. Harvey kindly put his Church at our disposal, and at our request preached to a Church crammed full of unemployed men. The burden of his sermon was that the distress had reached men who were honest, industrious, and anxious to work, and who infinitely preferred work to charity. He said something was radically wrong in our social arrangements, and laid considerable blame on the Christian Church in letting matters come to this pass.

"Also, we would mention the Revs. E. A. Fuller, U. R. Thomas, J. R. Graham, and G. E. Ford, and bear grateful testimony to the very able and admirable manner Mr. Robert Gray Tovey has advocated and worked in our cause. Mr. F. Gilmore Barnett, the Barton Hill Drum and Fife Band, and the Socialist Union also deserve our cordial thanks. Gratitude is due to the *Evening News* and the *Bristol Observer* for some truly generous and kind articles. We have nothing specially to blame the *Western Daily Press* for. The *Bristol Times and Mirror* has been true to its instincts and sneered and scolded accordingly, whilst the attitude of the *Bristol Mercury* has disgusted some of us and surprised us all.

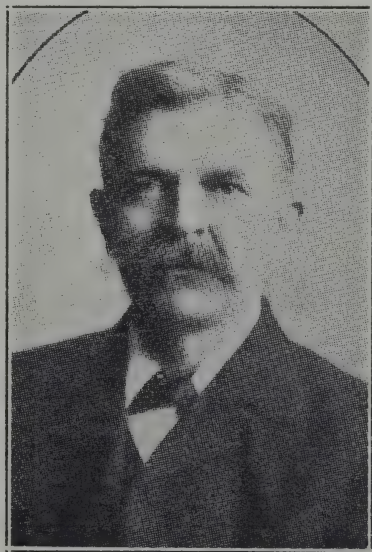
"There is still greater distress than ever before. Our efforts appear to have been thrown away, except for a sum of money subscribed sufficient, perhaps, to provide, if properly distributed, a small loaf each to the very large number of men, women and children in a semi-starving condition. For a very large number it is let the Mayor, *Mercury*, *Mirror*, and Mayor's myrmidons, mince and mock as they may, and take joy in such sickly pastime.

"But we will not say our efforts are altogether useless. It has taught us that there is no mistake in the idea that the case of unemployed men and women is well-nigh hopeless, and that an attempt to bring their condition before the public in an orderly and peaceful manner is fruitful in nothing scarcely but misrepresentation, calumny, jeers and gibes

of the well-to-do who live upon the produce of other people's labour, and are calmly content to laugh at their brothers and sisters, and little children, starving and dying, provided they do it not too noisily."

FRANK SHEPPARD.

Relations between the national body—the Social Democratic Federation—and the Bristol Socialist Society were now very cordial. Communications from the central executive were regularly sent to and received by the local society, which was thus kept in touch with the wider movement, towards which it contributed. As a purely local organisation, however, it, of course, had no representation in the councils of the party. Some comrades felt unhappy about this, and in '87 formed a local branch of the Federation. J. Watts Treasure voluntarily undertook the responsibilities of secretary, and a series of lectures were given at the Castle Coffee Palace by W. Blackmore, John Rogers, and Treasure. Other active members were J. Carpenter, J. Moule, and E. Shurmer.



FRANK SHEPPARD
(Labour's present-day Leader in the City Council).

Reports of the proceedings at branch meetings appeared in the local papers, and two in the *Western Daily Press* reveal the early association of Frank Sheppard with the socialist movement.

For some while he had been enthusiastic in persuading his fellow workers in the boot and shoe trade to join their trade organisation, and was at the same time taking a personal interest in the wider world of trade union politics, which led him to membership of this S.D.F. branch.

The press reports referred to are : "At a committee meeting of the branch held at Tucker's Coffee Room, Castle Street, on Saturday, February 18th, '88, Mr. Moule proposed and Mr. F. Sheppard seconded a resolution, '... to congratulate Messrs. John Burns and Cunningham Graham on their release from prison, and heartily thank them for their determined and manly fight for the freedom of speech in Trafalgar Square!'"

A fortnight later at the same place :

"... resolution proposed by J. Rogers, seconded by F. Sheppard was passed : 'that in consequence of the unsatisfactory replies of the Government concerning the right of the public to meet in Trafalgar Square, this meeting hopes that steps may be taken to test this right by the Social Democratic Federation in whatever manner the general council of the S.D.F. may judge best.'"

All the world knows that the S.D.F. took the necessary steps, and the right of public assembly and free speech in the Square has not been interfered with for many years.

These episodes in the younger days of the present leader of the Labour Party in the City Council indicate the spirit of determination that animated him.

The separate existence of the branch did not seem to be justified, for after a while it ceased to function. Its members linked up with the older body, and at a little later date Frank Sheppard became honorary secretary of the Bristol Socialist Society. He entered with zeal into the work of propaganda and comparatively early was elected both as a City Councillor and a Guardian of the Poor. Thus, much of his time and ability was diverted from the street corner and lecture room to the

Council Chamber and the board room and all the subsidiary work that that involved.

Still he took a big share in the open-air and indoor work of the movement, and as time and opportunity permitted was ever ready to take his place on the public platform as well as in the councils and organisation of the socialist and trade union forces.

TWO MAYORS.

At one time in the nineties he lived in Cairns Crescent, Ashley Road, and it is an interesting coincidence that at different dates this same working class dwelling housed two individuals who afterwards became high civic dignitaries—Mr. Geo. T. Cooke (a Mayor of Bath in 1911-12) and Frank Sheppard (the first Labour Lord Mayor of Bristol, 1917-18).

Beloved of his comrades, and respected by all who have come in contact with him, Frank Sheppard has done a great work for his class and the city. Glimpses of it will be revealed as these notes progress, but no pen can do it justice.

Another individual of strong character and personality became attached to the movement about this time :

E. J. WATSON.

Story has it that the open-air meetings held by the little group of enthusiastic socialists by the lamp on the Ropewalk, first attracted his attention. He frequently stopped to listen. The ideas gave him cause to ponder. He met H. H. Gore, and between the two an intimate friendship grew, and Watson "joined up." For several years he was a tower of strength to the Bristol Socialist Society. Desperately in earnest, he gave himself heart and soul to the new cause, and during the next decade was in the thick of all its strenuous fights.

A fine, forceful speaker, whether indoor or out, his speeches always commanded attention and drew large crowds. With a ready and masterful pen he wrote manifestoes, pamphlets, poems and press reports galore. In addition to the local press he contributed articles to many journals, including *The Commonwealth* (Morris' Socialist League publication).

His activities were not confined to Bristol. He frequently addressed

meetings in Oxford and London, and his influence was felt over a wide area. To the locals he was an inspiring counsellor and comrade in the highest sense. It was a tragedy very much regretted by many that a difference of opinion (probably only a misunderstanding after all) in the mid-nineties, was allowed to so

widen, that his great abilities were lost to the movement; but the work he did made an indelible mark on the period.

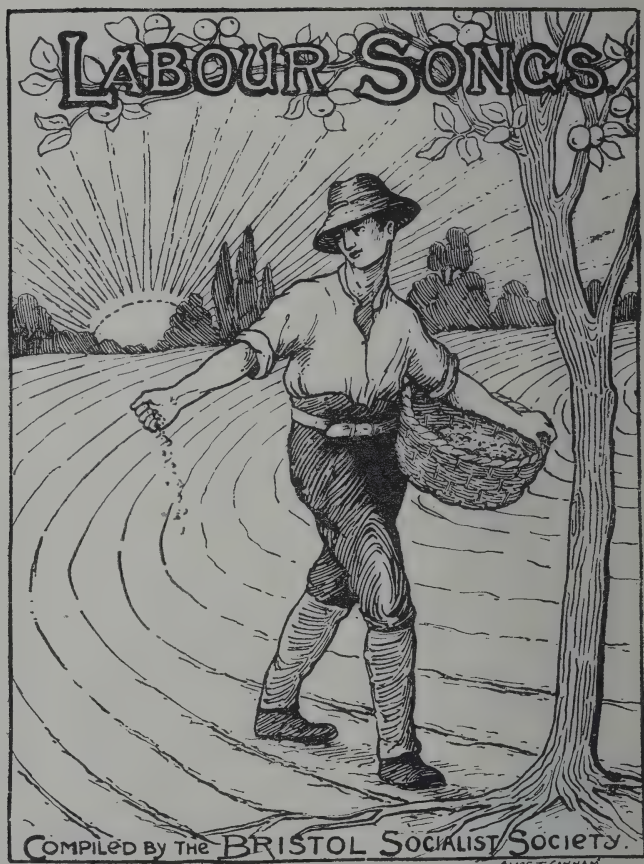
His topical verses were very popular, and from his *Song of the Miners* (air—*John Brown*), the following lines are taken :

Loud the voice of Justice ringeth,
It hath roused us from our sleep,
To the darksome mine it cometh
Where the pain is sore and deep,
For the seeds of love have quickened
And the reapers press to reap,
And Labour marches on.

In the murky mines we burrow,
In the temples of the dead,
Massing riches for the rich man
Whilst our children cry for bread,
But a sunray's pierced the gloaming
And the weary night has fled—
And Labour marches on.

Lo! the Workers' Day is dawning!
Cowards pale at Freedom's warning,
Glorious breaks the gladsome
morning,
And Labour marches on.





FRONTISPIECE OF SONG BOOK
(see page 20).

An Account of the
LABOUR AND SOCIALIST
MOVEMENT IN
BRISTOL.

Part II.

(TO END OF XIXTH CENTURY).

WHEN Part I. was issued in June, 1929, it was intended to publish Parts II. & III. separately, as they appeared, but subsequent requests were that they should be bound together with Part I. in a complete book.

This volume, which is limited in number, supplies that, and a special contribution by Ernest Bevin appears overleaf.



ERNEST BEVIN
(1931).

FOREWORD

TO PARTS II. AND III.

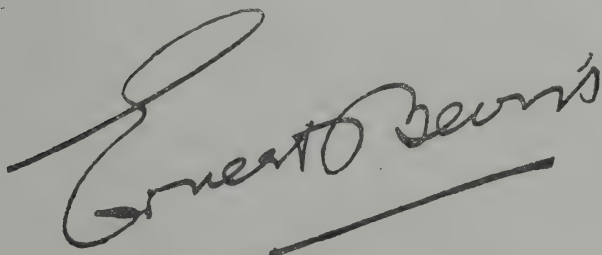
I HAVE often thought what a tragedy it would be if the History of the Labour and Socialist Movement in Bristol was allowed to go unrecorded. It is the more gratifying therefore to know now that the Bristol Socialist Society has arranged to publish this record of the historical part it has played, and of the contributions it and other pioneer bodies have made to the Labour and Socialist Movement, not merely locally, but nationally and internationally.

The outstanding feature is not only of the work, but the record of those who found expression for their faith in the Socialist Movement. It was a remarkable faith, especially having regard to the almost complete ignorance of economic subjects which existed amongst the masses of the people.

The value also of this work will be in keeping fresh and green in our memories, the characters of those who made such sacrifices for our Movement, and who inspired so many in all walks of life, to carry on the good work.

Their teaching and philosophy has actuated many of us in our own approach to the problems which face us now in the wider fields and the more responsible positions. Every little success which came their way, was an inspiration to them to greater effort, and every rebuff, called forth greater determination to achieve their goal.

I shall always remember them with gratefulness for the help they gave to me, and although many of those whose names appear in this book have passed to the Great Beyond and will be unknown to the younger generation, yet one may express the hope that this History of the Movement in Bristol will be an inspiration to the rising generation.

A large, stylized handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Ernesto Rossi". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long horizontal line extending from the end.

June, 1931.

Part II.

(to end of XIXth century).

SOCIABLE SOCIALISTS.

"... Where women walk in public processions in the streets the same as the men; where they enter the public assembly and take places the same as the men... there the great city stands."

These words of Whitman rightly imply that no community will endure or become powerful that fails to command the activities, love and devotion of women equally with men, and, it may be inferred, no movement will suffice to that end unless in its furtherance many



MIRIAM DANIELL,

(Bristol Socialist enthusiast, 1889,
died 1894).

sides of its adherents' nature are appealed to and developed—

"... Your facts are useful, and yet they are not my dwelling; I but enter by them to an area in my dwelling."

In order to grow and conquer, the home—husband, wife and child—must become the centre of its teaching and influence, reaching thence to the world's circumference and gravitating back again.

Theoretically, the socialist movement complied with this condition, but as yet its devotees were mainly of the male sex and its work confined to the "propagation of the word;" but a tea and social evening was held by the Bristol Socialist Society on Michaelmas Day, 1887, in which thirty-four adults and several children participated. The new and wider phase had begun. Robt. Gilliard in a retrospective note some years afterwards aptly described it—

"The only disadvantage of all this (active propaganda and organising work) was the late hours of arriving home, and sometimes, it is feared, the black looks on such arrival, and the too true complaint that 'it is the same every night, Sunday and weekday alike'."

But for that disadvantage the members who took part in these doings look back at them with a thrill of pleasure. "You see," remarked one of them, "we were despised, ostracised, spurned, and, as far as possible, persecuted. We stood alone as a very small but defiant body of rebels, with the finger of scorn pointed towards us; but, and perhaps largely because of this, we lived intensely and cared not for anything but our ideal and the genuine comradeship which had sprung up between us. And as to that disadvantage before alluded to, well, could it not be remedied by cultivating a social side to our work? Good thought! And soon the wives and children and sweet-hearts and friends were enticed to public teas, dances, theatrical entertainments, etc., in connection with the Society, and then, aye, then, let anyone who dared complain of the late hours. Thus we won our families over to the cause, and with them their most valuable help."

WOMEN PROPAGANDISTS.

The realisation of sex equality in public work for Socialism was accelerated locally by Helena Born and Miriam Daniell. Both joined the movement at the same period. Prefacing a book by the former on *Whitman's Ideal Democracy and other writings*, that was published in U.S.A. (1902) Helen Tufts tells their life's story.

Born in a Devonshire village on May 11th, 1860, Helena Born first attended a Hatherleigh day school, then an academy at Taunton, but the wide world became her university wherein she was ever graduating from endeavour to achievement. She loved music, and when the family moved to Bristol she sang in the choir of Oakfield Road Unitarian Church, where Mr. Hargreaves was pastor. At the church Debating Society's discussions she often forced herself against a well nigh insuperable diffidence, to say a few words. Advancing into the broader currents of thought she eagerly followed the intellectual and public interests of the day. It was a great trial to her that her people disapproved of her taking up these subjects. She read widely but was about 28 years of age before Whitman's *Leaves of Grass* came her way. Thoreau's *Walden*, and Carpenter's *Towards Democracy* soon followed. These had a lasting effect.

An artist and poet friend of similar age was Miriam Daniell, whose studies had led her to embrace the socialist gospel. Both resided in Clifton, and had similar tastes. Both were devotees of the new cult of asceticism in dress. Jointly they sought the natural beauties of field and flower, and in the course of long country rambles, Miriam imparted to Helena her enthusiasm for humanitarian causes.

The opportunity to test their principles came when the low-lying districts of the city were inundated by flood (March, '89), and many of the poorest citizens suffered greatly. Together they went to help in relief, not in the guise of charity, but as co-workers anxious to be of service.

Soon after this the country was stirred by the London dockers' strike for their "tanner an hour," and similar upheavals amongst the "unskilled" workers. Bristol be-

came a storm centre, and with a view to helping both in the work of organising all and sundry into trade unions and bringing to a successful issue the strikes that were spontaneously occurring in all directions, a strong local organising committee of socialists and trade unionists sprang into being. One of the first results was a local branch of the

GAS WORKERS AND GENERAL LABOURERS' UNION.

Helena and Miriam were actively associated with this and the work of the organising committee. Needed everywhere at once, they addressed meetings, led parades, helped collect strike funds, and distribute relief. In connection with the latter Miriam interviewed a local bank manager, unsuccessfully seeking an overdraft. They were strenuous days and nights of unrelenting service, and their house in Louisa Street, St. Philips (they had given up their comfortable quarters in Clifton to live in simplicity in the midst of the working people) became a veritable hive of socialist workers.

The criticism and remonstrances of their conventional friends was sorely felt by Helena, but she never flinched from her considered duty. At an earlier date she had worked with the Women's Liberal Association, and in a letter to a friend still connected with that body she forcibly defended her changed position.

"I have had ample opportunity of observing the attitude of the socialist leaders in Bristol, and I have no hesitation in saying that their antagonism is not directed toward individuals of the capitalist or any other class, but against the present competitive system. They are men who sacrifice cheerfully and persistently for ideals which few would deny to be noble.

"Equality and freedom for women is one phase of an ideal of universal freedom and equality. I have not taken up a new position without carefully thinking it out. . . ."

Helena Born continued: "The principles of Socialism, as I understand them, seem to me economically incontrovertible, and to comprise spiritual ideals of unity and brotherhood which alone can transmute the materialism of our time. And I feel that the only effectual way to convince others of

the truth of one's principles, and to bring about the new time, is by living them. . . .

"It is uphill work, but we cannot isolate ourselves from the mass. . . . To the loyal there is a joy, as Whitman says, in 'being tossed in the brave turmoil of these time.' "

COTTON OPERATIVES.

Helena and Miriam and their comrades, found themselves the active leaders of the Bristol Cotton Operatives in a strike and 'desperate struggle.' The following written by a working man in 1889, gives a vivid description of some of the conditions of labour then pertaining :

"Would to God Mr.—knew the facts as these poor cotton girls know them. Would that he had had them burnt into his soul by the same bitter experience as they. Then how changed a man, how much wiser even he would be. Facts! yes, by all means. Young girls leave their homes soon after five o'clock in the morning—some, who have come from long distances, even earlier than this—to trudge through all kinds of weather, winter and summer, to get to the factory at six a.m., and if they arrive two minutes

late they have a fine inflicted on them out of all proportion to the rate of wages they are paid. We will follow one into the factory. She goes into the weaving shed, and as the day goes on we find she is working in a temperature of 100 degrees, and in a damp atmosphere that makes her clothes soaking wet. Look! there stands the girl at her loom, with her apron to her eyes, wiping away the tears which she cannot repress. Listen, and you will hear her say: 'I would rather the workhouse or gaol than this.' That is no fiction of the mind, but cruel fact, and far from a solitary one."

Some time was spent in an almost hopeless attempt to organise in a union the ill paid seamstresses who worked in their homes scattered over the country around Bristol. An organisation was effected, but the nature of the membership, women who carried home their work, and were thus largely strangers to one another, proved an obstacle so serious that little seems to have been then accomplished. It was pioneer work, and the subsequent success of women's labour unions, even in sweated industries, justified the effort.

They also engaged in the increasing educational work the Bristol Socialist Society was ever organising. "Urging upon our fellow workers the universal importance of frequently discussing and thoroughly studying our present conditions as wage slaves, and the means to be adopted to free ourselves from the yoke which now presses so heavily upon us," the B.S.S. had prepared a list of lectures which its members would deliver free of cost to any Labour or any other societies. The list included lectures on "Why women should organise," and "The aristocracy of sex," by Helena Born, and by Miriam Daniell on "Cosmopolitanism not patriotism," "Evolution of women," "Nihilism," and "Socialism and art." To her comrades of the society Miriam presented a beautiful banner designed and executed by herself, depicting the flaming heart of freedom—a gift that was valued highly and for a long while adorned the meeting place.

So much energy and exhausting labour was expended in all these efforts that neither had time nor inclination to keep a record of the events, and could never, in later



HELENA BORN
(active in Bristol Movement, 1889.
Died, 1901).

years, recall details of their life at this period, so as to furnish a consecutive story. In the autumn of 1890 Miriam decided to leave England, and asked Helena to accompany her. She did not hesitate. Both dreamed of a pilgrimage to the land of Emerson, Thoreau and Whitman, and set forth for Boston. The gulf between them and the circles in which they had once moved, and which criticised, censured and condemned them for adopting the course to which they were impelled by their convictions; had long before now grown so wide that no attempt was made to bridge it.

They had, however, won the love and admiration of the local comrades whose messages of goodwill were mingled with much regret at the parting. A local comrade briefly described them: "Miriam was a fiery enthusiast, whose vital forces could not be suppressed. . . She feared nothing. To such a spirit Helena, cool, balanced, self-controlled, proved an invaluable companion. No less self-sacrificing than Miriam, her ideals equally lofty, her unobtrusive counsel and loving rebukes . . . were the modulating influence ever present upon the high-strung, impetuous soul of her friend."

IN AMERICA.

They settled for a while in Boston and as a means of earning a living learnt typesetting, which they supplemented by a variety of literary efforts. In 1892 Helena visited England for about a year, and spent a short time with the Bristol comrades. On returning to America she went with Miriam to the Sierras of the West, where they lived in simple Thoreau style 'a full, intense, romantic life.' Miriam died in April, '94. This induced Helena to return to Boston where she joined a branch of the Walt Whitman Fellowship, to which she read many essays she had written. In 1900 she was suddenly and mysteriously attacked by a fatal disease. The first pangs of parting subdued, she calmly bade farewell to life and all the joy, present and to come, that it held for her. "Death is good, too," she said, and passed away on February 27th, '01. A few days later her body was given to the flames and her ashes scattered on the shore of Walden Pond.

In one of her later essays Helena

wrote, "... Social effort is (some-what as love is) its own fulfilment, irrespective of success." This accurately describes the spirit in which they lived and worked.

Two brave pioneer women. Cheery and inspiring, they cannot be translated on to paper. They were of those who make a track to the water's edge, whence other men and women afterwards build the bridge across which the entire human race will pass to heaven on earth.

POLICE INTERFERENCE.

A socialist meeting had just begun in the Haymarket on Sunday evening, July 8th, 1888, and J. Watts-Treasure was speaking, when he was quietly tapped on the shoulder by a man in blue and informed that it was against the rules to hold meetings in that place. He could give no reason and referred all who wanted information on the matter to the Inspector at the Central Police Station. Instead of accepting this invitation, it was immediately announced that a meeting would be held at the spot where they were now speaking on the following Wednesday evening in connection with the coming visit of Prince Albert Victor to Bristol. The City Council were proposing to confer a Freedom of the City on H.R.H., a suggestion to which exception was taken by what the chairman of one of the Liberal Operatives branches described as "a strong minority."

The Secularists' Society were holding a meeting at the same time, and the supporters of both bodies adjourned to a room at St. James' Hall (Cumberland Street) to consider the position. The result was that F. Hulbert, R. Sharland, J. W. Treasure, T. A. Williams, — Wools, J. Sharland, J. Keast, R. S. Gilliard, W. A. Sharland, and R. Weare were appointed as a committee to see matters through. Three thousand handbills were printed and distributed calling the Wednesday meeting, and a goodly crowd assembled. The press reported it as from two to three hundred, but the conveners' own estimate was eight hundred.

Robt. Weare took the chair, and was supported by S. W. Pritchett, J. G. Jones, J. Keast, and others. Three resolutions were submitted and adopted with only two or three dissentients. The first protested against the Town Council present-

ing an address to Prince Albert Victor; the second asserted the right of the citizens to hold public meetings in the Haymarket, and the third, that Mr. R. G. Tovey be requested to present the first resolution to the Council.

WOULD GO TO PRISON.

Speaking in support of the second resolution, J. Watts Treasure referred to police interruption of his speech on the preceding Sunday, and said that he had come to-night prepared, if need be, to go to prison. The authorities, however, did not interfere this time.

The Town Council met on the following Friday, and the resolution was in possession of the Town Clerk, but the Mayor (Chas. Wathen) refused to allow it to be read, characterising it as "disloyal and disgraceful." Mr. Tovey protested in vain. The proposed address was then read and all the members immediately rose to their feet to carry it by acclamation. Tovey mounted a seat to speak in opposition, but was shouted down and refused a hearing.

On the next Wednesday, in the Haymarket, a further and larger protest meeting was held. The press noted increase in size and estimated the attendance as 500, or just a fourth of what the speakers calculated. R. G. Tovey presided this time, and over the heads of the speakers was a banner inscribed "God save the people!" Mr. J. Vickery (who became the first chairman of the Bristol Branch of the Gas Workers' Union) moved a resolution "indignantly condemning the arbitrary conduct of the Mayor and Council in refusing to allow the resolution which was passed at a large meeting of ratepayers to be read in the Council, and the unfair means by which the Royal Address was adopted in the face of opposition, and hereby emphatically asserts the right of citizens irrespective of their political opinions to be heard in the Council through a properly elected representative." Albert Vincent seconded, and it was carried with about half-a-dozen against.

A further resolution, protesting against the Freedom of the City "the gift of which should be a recognition of services rendered," being presented to Prince Albert Victor, "who has nothing to recommend him but hereditary privileges, and viewing

the proposal as simply an effort to bolster up a false system of society under which idlers live in luxury and the toiling masses in misery," was declared to be carried unanimously.

The Mayor no longer resisted the right of citizens assembled in public meeting to approach the Town Council by resolution, and a few days later that body listened to the reading of these two resolutions; but Mr. Tovey was alone in voting against the Freedom of the City being conferred. He thus courageously proved himself to be worthy of the trust the workers had placed in him.

ANTI-HUMBUGS.

The Committee now considered further steps. A counter-procession to the Royal one was suggested, but turned down on account of there being no general holiday announcement. It was decided, however, to draw up and publish a handbill explaining what had been accomplished, and the leaflet, headed "Anti-Humbug" and referring in heavy type to the Mayor as KING WATHEN, stated this under two heads:

(1) The successful vindication of the people's right to hold Public Meetings in open spaces where no obstruction is caused.

(2) The maintenance of our right to be heard in the Town Council, against an arrogant attempt to refuse that right by the Mayor and his followers.

Continuing the leaflet, the Committee "call upon their fellow working-men, who purpose attending this stupid show, to pause and consider. Will you cheer for the degradation to which you, your wives and children, brothers and sisters are reduced by the present arrangements of society? Will you cheer for 'MORE WORK and LESS PAY'? Will you cheer when children are crying for bread, for money being squandered as you see it? Will you cheer for the fearful ordeal and sufferings of the last two winters, whilst a worse is approaching? Will you cheer to be taunted that your want of work at such times means 'you WON'T WORK'? Will you cheer for all manner of insult and abuse, when, in distress, you approach those who are in authority?

"CHEER THESE THINGS and

you lick the feet that kick you."

To the waiting crowds along the whole line of the procession five thousand of these handbills were distributed by Robt. Sharland and a sympathiser named Long—"long" Long as his friends called him on account of his unusual height. They were unhindered and unmolested, but it was a courageous thing to do, and many have declared the effect was to minimise very considerably the usual cheering.

DAN IRVING.

Prominent amongst the local working class politicians of the time was Dan Irving. For some time employed by the Midland Railway Company, he had risen to the position of foreman shunter, but in a serious accident lost a leg. Thus incapacitated he was compelled to accept another job given him by the Company at a reduced wage. Of frugal habits he made the best of his circumstances, and took interest in public affairs. He joined the Liberal Party, was energetic in its ranks and became chairman of one of the branches of the Liberal Operatives Association. His outlook was demo-

cratic radical, and at the meeting in the Haymarket on July 18th, 1888, he moved the resolution of protest. This act met with the disapproval of some of the bigger fry of that party, and one official thought it necessary to rebuke Irving for what he had done. It is to the Operatives' credit that they sided with their chairman and adopted a motion strongly condemning the Mayor and Council for their treatment of Tovey.

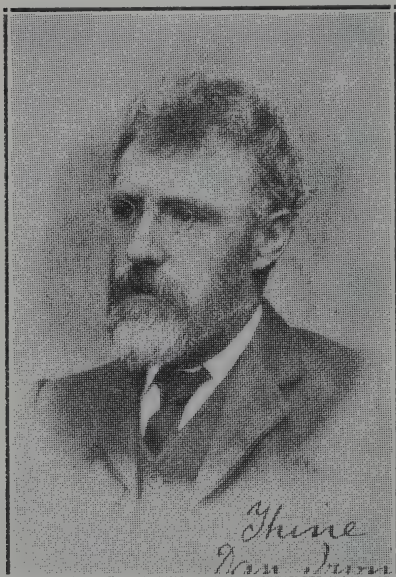
On two or three occasions Irving had attended meetings of the Labour League, and was not unsympathetic, although in his mind the main remedies for poverty were teetotalism and thrift. He continued with the Liberal Operatives, and as chairman he found himself called upon to combat the attacks of socialists. To this end he studied all he could, but the Haymarket incidents brought him into closer personal contact with the socialist element. He attended their meetings accompanied by his friend W. J. Petherick. To both radicalism was an ideal demanding support, and the two not only put posers to the speakers but offered fiery criticism of the socialists' claims. Oft "sparks" flew.

Living in the same part of the city as Weare and Gilliard, the four frequently discussed points further in walks home together; and these talks told. The inexhaustible knowledge, patience and reasoning of Gilliard and Weare was phenomenal, and seekers of truth, as Irving and Petherick, could not but be persuaded.

LEAVES LIBERALS.

The result was that Dan Irving left the Liberal Operatives and its chairmanship for the ranks of the socialist movement, and his pal, Will Petherick also joined.

It is possible that the accession of these to the movement was the greatest good derived from that agitation. Anyway, both for nearly 40 years after in differing ways, threw themselves unceasingly into the thick of the work for humanity. Dan himself left the city a few years later, and after a while settled in Burnley as the Secretary of the Social Democratic Federation at the St. James' Hall. He was elected to the School Board there in '98, and later to the Council and the Board of Guardians. As a socialist he fought parliamentary elections at



DAN IRVING

(Social Democrat. Died, 1924.
Joined Bristol Movement, 1888).

N.W. Manchester, Rochdale, Accrington and Burnley. At the latter he was elected in 1918, retaining the seat until his death.

On January 3rd, 1924, he had the unique distinction for a socialist, of having the Freedom of the town conferred upon him. It was only a month later that he died, and great was the respect shown by the citizens for their socialist M.P. "Flags flew half-mast from the municipal buildings, the shops in the centre of the town were all closed, mills and workshops had shut early, and for the greater part of the three-and-a-half miles route to the cemetery people, not curious, but sad and sympathetic lined the route... Wreaths filled four landaus of the funeral procession."

Of him, H. W. Lee, the editor of *Justice* wrote: "... he shone because of his absolute sincerity and friendship."

MORE COUNCIL CONTESTS.

Two efforts were made by the Labour League in '88 to add a second to Tovey in the Council. In St. James' Ward, S. W. Pritchett was nominated at the usual November contest. It was Labour's first attempt in St. James', and Pritchett polled 55 votes, against 363 for E. T. Lewis (Ind.) who headed the poll, and 333 for Mr. A. Pottow (Liberal).

A bye-election occurred a few days after, in St. Paul's Ward, owing to Mr. Chas. Wathen being made an Alderman. To fill the vacancy thus caused on the Council the candidates were three: Mr. J. Coulthard (Liberal), Mr. W. H. Woodward (Conservative), and Mr. Albert Vincent (Labour), but the Conservative withdrew, and a close fight resulted in the Liberals retaining the seat:

Coulthard (Lib.) 624

Vincent (Lab.) 553

Labour's nominee thus polled practically the same number of votes as Tovey received two years previously in a straight fight, and 135 more than were necessary to elect him in the three-cornered contest of '87.

Vincent, addressing the crowd at the poll's declaration, said he had nothing to say against his opponent personally. He believed in principles before men, and was persuaded that the working classes would never better themselves until they worked for it themselves. He hoped

every one of his supporters would stand true to the principles of Labour.



ALBERT VINCENT
(prominent in Bristol's Labour Movement of 80's and 90's, and sometime President of Trades Council).

SONGS FOR SOCIALISTS.

Following the publication of "Chants for Labour," Wm. Reeves brought out "A Song Book for Socialists" (price, a penny), which contained 28 good songs. Strong believers in the value of song, this book was used by the Bristol Socialist Society for a time, and proved very helpful. It led them to get out a sheet of their own. They hoped by the judicious distribution of these sheets at open air meetings to excite public interest in songs of socialism, and for many years Bristol was noted throughout the country for its singing at Labour and Socialist meetings—as, indeed, it still is.

'Tis worth recording that the four selected songs were "The Coming of the Light," by D. J. Nicoll (tune, "Wearing of the Green"); "Hark the Battle Cry is Ringing," by H. S. Salt (air, "Men of Harlech"); "A New Marseillaise," by D. J. Nicoll; and "The March of the Workers," by Wm. Morris (air, "John Brown.")

What is this, the sound and
rumour?

What is this that all men hear?
Like the wind in hollow valleys

when the storm is drawing near,
Like the rolling of the ocean in the
eventide of fear,

'Tis the people marching on.
On we march, then, we, the workers,
and the rumour that ye hear
Is the blended sound of battle, and
deliverance drawing near :
For the hope of every creature is
the banner that we bear,
And the world is marching on.
Hark! the rolling of the thunder,
Lo, the sun, and lo, thereunder,
Riseth wrath, and hope, and wonder,
And the host comes marching on.

SOCIALISTS AND SCHOOL BOARD.

In the fall of the year ('88) the Clifton and Bristol Christian Socialists, thinking that many citizens sympathised with the general opinions they held with regard to education, decided to seek representation on the School Board at the triennial election of January, 1889, and sponsored the candidature of Hugh Holmes Gore. This was the first occasion on which a definitely socialist candidate had appealed to the Bristol electors. Extracts from his address will show that his programme was a very advanced one :

"I believe that education should be compulsory . . . free also, or without direct cost to the parents. .

"State education should, I think, be secular. . .

"Though I do not consider it within the province of the Board School to at present give technical education, I think much might be done by teaching children the intelligent use of their hands. . .

"I shall endeavour to have the playgrounds opened for children to play there after school during the hours of daylight, and throughout the holidays, and gymnasiums put up in every playground to develop fully their bodily powers. . .

"Food for the mind without food for the body is a farce. I am in favour of giving free meals to children who need them. . .

"I would wish to see the teachers paid good wages for their labour. . .

"I would do all in my power to see that the contract and other work done for the Board is done at not less than trade union wages throughout. . .

"I would rather see the good that is in the children developed than

have them stuffed with useless facts which do not tend to strengthen their character.

"I would see them trained in perfect exercise and kingly continence of mind and body.

"I would remind you that the Board School is used for the children of the poor only; it is not good enough for the children of the rich; some day I hope it will be good enough for all. I am anxious to go to the Board as a delegate and servant of those whose children go to the Board Schools now; for, as a follower of the Poor Man of Nazareth, I am more careful for the poor than for the rich. . ."

GORE'S CANDIDATURE

was enthusiastically endorsed by the Bristol Socialist Society.

When it was brought before a Labour League meeting on December 4th, Mr. J. G. Jones, the chairman, said he had questioned Gore on many points and found his replies perfectly consistent with the desires of the League on the education question. He should like them, therefore, to bear in mind the candidature whilst deciding what number the League should run, and he thought they should advance at least two. Mr. Fox was appealed to to again come forward as a candidate, but much to the League's regret he reported that a special meeting of the organisation of which he was secretary was not agreeable to spare him the time necessary, and he was reluctantly compelled to withdraw. He was also constrained by domestic affliction to retire.

Robt. Weare was then asked to stand, and agreed if "he could succeed in making some necessary arrangements with his employers."

A serious controversy then arose as to the division of votes between the Labour and Socialist candidates.

MINORITY REPRESENTATION.

It should be explained here that the School Board consisted of fifteen members, and each elector had that number of votes, which he could divide between the candidates in any way selected. Thus electors could give all the fifteen votes "plump" for one candidate, give fifteen candidates one vote each, five candidates three votes each, or divide them in any proportion he desired between

any number of candidates so long as the total number of votes did not exceed fifteen. It was a method that had certain commendatory features, such as giving minorities a chance.

One section of the League thought members should cast all their votes for the League's own nominee, others considered that if their votes were split between the two, good ground existed for anticipating a double success. At this stage Weare saw the possibility of grave difference arising in the campaign, and to avoid this, announced his determination of withdrawing. The debate which was continued "in a fair and friendly spirit" up to 11 o'clock, was then adjourned to the following week, but as then no one could be found to accept nomination, they "were reluctantly obliged to abandon the idea of running a candidate." "It was also made manifest at this meeting," said the secretary in a letter to the press, "that three-fourths of the League leaders were associated with a fraternal Christian Socialist Society and were in duty bound to support the candidature of Mr. H. H. Gore, though they were willing to do so in conjunction with the Labour interest if a candidate should be in the field."

LABOUR ALSO.

Unanimity now prevailed, but a complication arose a fortnight later when Mr. R. Tovey informed the monthly League meeting that several members of the Trades Council who shared his regret "that the League should have arrived at a decision so adverse to the interest of Labour," as not attempting to retain a representative at the School Board, felt that further efforts should be made, and as a result Mr. T. G. Harding had consented to become the candidate of the Labour Party.

Mr. Harding having addressed the company, a resolution was unanimously approved, "of opinion that Mr. Thos. Geo. Harding is highly deserving of the hearty support of the working classes." In the discussion most of the speakers expressed their determination to divide their votes between the Labour and Socialist candidates, but this course was not unanimously adopted.

Separate addresses were issued, and Harding's differed very little from Gore's except in the manner of

its presentation. Both agreed that education should be free and secular, opposed rate aid for sectarian schools, advocated the opening of the playgrounds after school hours and during holidays, and insisted that work done for the Board should be at not less than trade union wages; but Gore also advocated giving free meals to children needing them, and generally adopted a more "advanced" tone on education itself.

DIVIDED FORCES.

Some of Gore's supporters resented the late nomination of Harding, who was practically unknown, and issued a leaflet urging all to 'plump' 15 votes for Gore.

Gore, too, was an excellent speaker, well known for his public propaganda of socialist and labour views, and as champion of the unemployed.

The result was that his candidature appealed to the electorate in a way that Harding's failed to do, and the ultimate figures of the poll were:—

ELECTED.

H. J. Walker (Educationalist)	16,717
H. H. Gore (Socialist)	14,132
*Monsignor Clarke (Rom. C.)	13,047
*M. Whitwill (Liberal)	12,163
*J. H. Woodward (Cons.)	11,775
Rev. J. Thompson (Cons.)	11,501
*Rev. J. G. Alford (Cons.)	10,640
*A. Froud (Cons.)	10,085
*Miss Sturge (Liberal)	9,935
*Rev. U. R. Thomas (Liberal)	8,705
Rev. M. Crofton (Liberal)	8,564
*Miss Taylor (Cons.)	7,864
F. S. Toplis (Protestant)	7,827
W. H. Elkins (Liberal)	7,685
Mrs. Swann (Liberal)	7,289

UNSUCCESSFUL.

T. Davis (Liberal)	7,150
*J. Gould (Liberal)	6,691
T. Harding (Labour)	3,869
*Rev. A. C. Macpherson (Ind.)	3,670
W. Peplar (Ind.)	306
*Members of old Board.	

Gore was one of the first socialists to be elected to any School Board in the country.

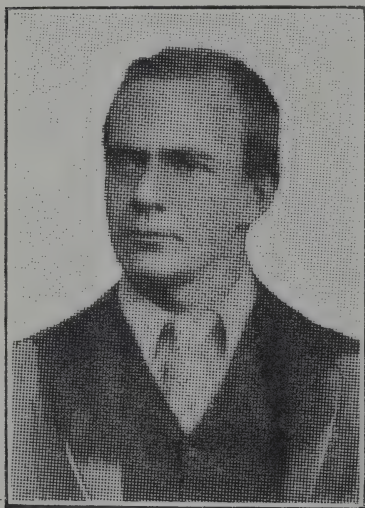
It will be observed that had the socialist and labour votes been equally apportioned, both would have been successful.

PAYING THE PIPER.

At the League's next meeting, Harding's costs were reported as £7 10s., but the treasurer only had ten shillings in hand, which, on the

motion of Mr. Sainsbury, it was decided to "present" to the fund!

A significant and not altogether unkind nor wholly accurate reference accompanies this record: "... much regret was expressed at the waste of voting power. It was felt that our socialist friends had reaped their harvest in ground which had been broken and made fruitful by the work of the Labour League, but despite this feeling gladness in Mr. Gore's election was made manifest."



H. H. GORE

(Elected Socialist Member Bristol School Board, January, 1889).

The Labour League had not as yet accepted the principles of Socialism as a basis or object. The number of conscious Socialists in the movement was still very small, and practically all the work of open air meetings and education of the people in the economics and ideals of socialist and labour doctrines was confined to the socialist bodies themselves, and at least two or three more years passed before any other bodies joined in this work.

THE SECOND INTERNATIONAL.

This success at the School Board Election occurred at the beginning of an eventful year for the movement, locally, nationally and internationally.

Differences of view points and

ideals amongst the members of the International Working Men's Association of '64, widened as time passed and led to its break up in '72; but an essential feature of the working class movement is its international solidarity of outlook, and the approach of the centenary of the outbreak of the French Revolution gave impetus to the desire for an international meeting and exchange of opinion. In France, Germany, Holland, and other countries suggestions were put forward, and in England, on the instruction of the Trade Union Congress of September, '88, the Parliamentary Committee held a preliminary international gathering in London in the following December.

The result of all these "feelers" was to entrust the French Workers' Organisations to call a conference. This was done, but the French movement was in two sections, the "possibilists," and the "Marxists." These could not agree amongst themselves so a conference was summoned by each side for the same date in Paris.

Bristol was not directly represented at either, but that stalwart friend of the local members, Ed. Carpenter, attended the "Marxist" Congress for the Sheffield socialists; and to this assembly the Socialist League, the Scottish Labour Party, and the Ayrshire Miners' Association sent delegates, whilst representatives of the T.U. Congress, the Fabian Society, and the S.D.F. favoured the "possibilists."

In all over twenty countries were represented, and a strong feeling was expressed at both assemblies for a united congress, and this unity was accomplished at Brussels in 1891.

The separate congresses adopted similar resolutions. The workers were urged to agitate for a maximum 8-hour day, prohibition of child labour, abolition of standing armies, etc. Labour Day was instituted by a decision that "a great international demonstration shall be organised on May 1st."

Of this Walter Crane wrote:

"Like the voice of many waters,
Hear the tongues of every land!
Gather Labour's sons and daughters

With one heart to understand.
Sound upon the pipe and tabor!
Blow the trumpet, beat the drum!

Leave your toil, ye sons of
Labour!
Come a-maying, toilers, come!

Crane also expressed his appreciation of the import of these gatherings in an art drawing which he drew specially for the occasion, and which was adapted for use at the London Congress eight years later (see page 60, part II.)

Of the

IDEALS AND RESOLVES

of the First International Congress Ed. Carpenter wrote: "In the street, Paris had just celebrated with one accord the enfranchisement of the workers from feudal chains; here (in the congress rooms) in quiet, were being taken the first steps towards the establishment of an international understanding between those workers, with a view to the industrial society of the future. It was good and promising. ."

Whilst Hyndman, who was a delegate to the other section wrote, later, "... we socialists when we mean business are not keen to note any humorous touch in our own proceedings. So we solemnly held our International Socialist Congress to bring about the amity of the workers of the world . . . in two separate halls, purposely chosen at some distance from one another in order to avoid the possible consequences of fraternal greetings. . . Even as it was, the International Congresses of 1889 made a new and hopeful departure."

This International grew and was the means of much valuable interchange of thought. The differences between the "possibilists" and the "Marxists" were overcome, and the next Congress (at Brussels in '91) was of a united body; this can also be said of later gatherings—Zurich, '93, London, '96, Paris, 1900, Amsterdam, '04, Stuttgart, '07, and Copenhagen, '10, although at most of them there were strong divergences of opinion on questions of policy. In connection with the Stuttgart conference of '07, a Women's International Socialist Congress was held for the first time. The Bristol Socialist Society was represented at London (R. S. Gilliard), Stuttgart (W. S. Parnall), and Copenhagen (C. N. L. Shaw).

When the war clouds appeared in

1914, many, even anti-socialists, looked to "The International" as a means of preventing dreaded hostilities. The organisation did its utmost in that direction. It held huge international peace demonstrations in London, Paris, Berlin, and elsewhere (in France, the Socialist leader, Jean Jaures, was assassinated by a war-maddened jingo) and the socialists in each country strenuously urged peace on their respective governments, but all in vain.

At the call of the national bugle, as the armies advanced, the international fell almost as a house of cards. To explain "how and why" is outside the purview of these notes, but the hope that future buildings for peace will have surer foundations must be expressed.

THE RISINGS OF 1889.

In his "Reminiscences" Hyndman writes, "Did you ever speak from an orange box, which you had borrowed yourself from the fruit woman at the corner, to hundreds of dockers at the Dock Gates at five o'clock in the morning? . . . that was done by Jack Williams, Burrows, Hobart, Hunter Watts, Tom Mann, Ben Tillet, Will Thorne, Champion, and myself for weeks and months at a time. . . On the whole the most depressing experience I ever had. Others did a great deal more at the time than I did. . . but for myself I can safely say that nothing but the religion, not to say the fanaticism of Socialism, could have kept me up, at those early, chilly, depressing Dock Gate meetings. The strike of 1889 followed."

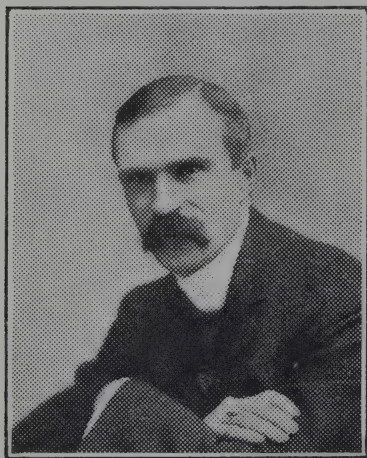
The Dockers' cry awakened sympathy in the most unexpected quarters. Cardinal Manning and other high-placed personages openly took the side of the men. The vigour displayed by Tom Mann, Ben Tillet, John Burns, and others, was amazing, and the loyalty of the men themselves magnificent. In spite of this, contributions fell off. Then a big contribution of £35,000 from Australia gave new life to the men. It at once became possible to carry on longer, and the "Dockers' Tanner," sixpence an hour for their hard and dangerous work, was conceded.

This strike, with that of the Gas Workers, and its success, fired the underworld of labour in other trades and throughout the provinces.

BRISTOL AND DISTRICT.

The spirit of these times spread to Bristol and the West. At Radstock (October, '89) a mass meeting was held. A strike of the Somerset miners had been concluded and the colliers presented gold watches to Mr. Edwards and Mr. Ashton "as a slight recognition of their services during the recent strike."

Bristol city became a seething centre of revolt. Without organisation, funds, or preparation of any kind, various bodies of workers struck for higher wages and better conditions of work. The operatives engaged at the Barton Hill works "came out" for an all-round revision of the terms of their employment (October, '89). Headed by Miriam Daniell and Jas. Vickery, the women and girls paraded day after day from the factory gates through the city to Clifton, and in the evening of October 25th, '89, they had a meeting of 4,000 people at the Ropewalk. E. J. Watson, speaking at this meeting, pressed them to persist in their demands for reduction of hours—to start work at 8 in the morning instead of 6, and to finish at 5.30 in the evening—also for a ten per cent. advance in wages.



E. J. WATSON
(Socialist speaker and writer,
'80's and '90's).

The leaders of the London strikes, John Burns, Ben Tillett, Tom Mann, and Will Thorne, were invited to Bristol for help and advice. Readily

they agreed to come. A procession and mass meeting was hurriedly arranged for Saturday, October 26th, '89. A dispute between London tramwaymen and their employers prevented John Burns leaving town, but the other three came down on the Saturday morning. At Temple Meads station they were met by the president of the Trades Council (John Gregory), Mr. Gilmore Barnett, Irving, Weare, Tovey, and Shearland.

It was a big rush for workers to get home for a hasty meal and re-assemble at the Cattle Market for a march to Durdham Downs, but many thousands mustered under the chief marshal, Mr. T. J. Dancy—the Trades Council's Secretary. The London delegates, with Mr. Gregory, occupied a carriage drawn by two horses, followed by members of the Trades Council, with Miriam Daniell and Helena Born in a four-horse brake. Mounted constables and Lysaght's brass band headed the procession, which, with gay banners, bands, and mottoes, proceeded via Victoria and Baldwin Street to the Downs. Nearly all trades participated, including 1,500 of the cotton operatives and the socialists with their now well known RED FLAG.

LABOUR DEMONSTRATION, 1889.

At the Cattle Market fifteen thousand joined the ranks. In many places the streets were thick with sight-seers, who mostly agreed that the palm for marching went to the "cotton girls." Their recent diurnal processions had made them adept. With linked arms they kept in line and step much better than all others.

At the Downs it was a very large mass of people who listened to the speeches. It was the first appearance in Bristol of the London speakers, all young men at that time. The local press gave a good account of them. Tillett . . . "who had not had the advantage of early education, must have made good mental use of his time. He is an excellent speaker, clear as he is fluent, and has no trouble in holding his audience. He evidently has his heart in the cause he espouses, which is one of the best stimulants of eloquence, and he gives an unmistakable impression of being in earnest. He is but 30 years of age, and scarcely looks that, and it would seem that

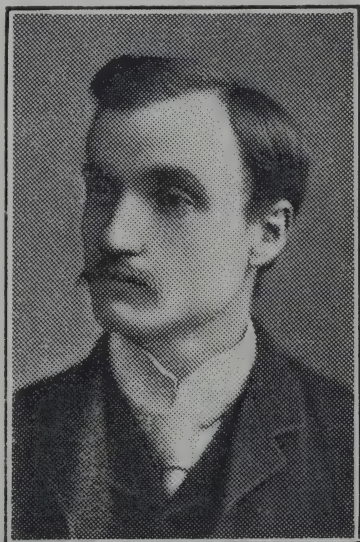
he is destined to wield an important influence in the future."

This reporter deserves congratulations for his discernment!—to-day's ex-president of the T.U.C. has more than justified that early prophecy.

"Tom Mann," the press continued, "... has essential qualities; he is pointed and direct and often incisive, but ... not so well able to sustain the interest as his colleague." Be that as it may, John Gregory introduced "the noble trio from London, the victors in the most significant contest between capital and labour that had ever occurred."

Tillett, who was loudly applauded, said that he "never anticipated he should take part in such a demonstration of Labour pure and simple, with a labourer as chairman and labourers as speakers, talking to their fellow men of union and combination. He was a citizen of Bristol, although only a youngster when he was starved out of the city, and they had many things to be proud of in the old town. It had been a history-making city, and had played an important part in the commerce of this wealthy land of theirs; but in bringing wealth to the country had it brought a proportionate amount of comfort and raised the standard of living amongst the workers as well? (No, no.) He was not there that day to tell them to strike and to riot and to pillage as one of their papers said was the case. In London 160,000 men were led through the city day after day without so much as an old woman losing an apple (applause). The same power that moved them then prompted them now. When these people wrote in this way of the labouring class let them go to the homes of the working men and see how much the capitalists had pillaged from them. Their only motive was to stop this pillaging, to put a little more into the pockets of the workmen and a little less into the pockets of those who already had them well filled, and might he say to Bristol men that this mighty labour movement that they were now taking part in was one of the most important steps which the labourer had taken, and he implored them not to lose their heads for nothing. It would gratify the desire of the newspaper he referred to to see the soldiers out on them, but they must not give way, they must be confident in their own

strength for they had nothing to fear or be ashamed of. He did not preach Atheism, but the disciples of Him who taught them how to live good lives ought to know they were doing wrong in taking 25 per cent. dividends which was so much food wrung out of women's and children's stomachs. What he wanted was not to fight them for their religious opinions but to tell the men who prayed to God on Sunday and then preyed on their fellow beings all the week that they were doing wrong. The workers with their brawny arms and the brains they possessed, made all the wealth of the country, and were entitled to live a comfortable life."



BEN TILLETT

(Leader of the great Dock Strike, 1889).

Tillett's speech was greeted with loud applause, and with those of Thorne and Mann, deeply impressed the vast audience who, at two platforms, adopted with hearty cheers a resolution demanding "that the conditions of Labour shall be materially improved, and pledging itself to join in *bona fide* labour organisation for the accomplishment of that object."

The socialists "who" (*vide* press) "were well represented in the procession, their red flag taking a fore-

most position amongst the rest, as it has in other recent demonstrations," spoke from a cab on the Downs to three or four thousand people. Robt. Weare presided at this gathering and urged that the workers "should organise as to be able with one common voice to insist upon the machinery and the land being taken over by the people for their commonwealth. It should not be held, as now, for the benefit of the few at the expense of the degradation of the masses." E. J. Watson and Wm. Baster also spoke, and the press referred to Weare's speech on the Co-operative Commonwealth as "over the people's head."

BRISTOL STRIKE COMMITTEE.

After the demonstration, a meeting of sympathisers was held at the Castle Street Coffee Palace. Mr. F. Gilmore Barnett was voted to the chair and Messrs. Tillett, Mann and Thorne all spoke, "urging the formation of a committee to render every possible assistance to the, at present, unorganised workers of Bristol, including the obtaining of necessary offices, the issue of posters and circulars, and by every other way to assist the workers of both sexes." This was unanimously agreed to, and a further meeting was arranged for the following day at the same place to go further into details. At this meeting E. J. Watson presided, and on the motion of John Gregory it was decided to take a room at the British Workman Coffee Tavern (New Street), and Mr. Robt. Nicol was appointed organising secretary at a salary of 30/- per week, which was later increased to two pounds per week, with R. S. Gilliard as hon. assistant secretary.

The "committee" was practically the whole membership of the Bristol Socialist Society, augmented by F. Gilmore Barnett, R. G. Tovey, Albert Vincent, Harold Brabham, and a few other advanced trade unionists.

For the next few months the strike committee met almost daily, dealing with all manner of disputes and other difficult situations. One trouble that required a lot of careful handling was as to which of the different unions' workers should be invited to join. There was something approaching jealousy between some supporters of the Gas Workers and General Labourers and those of

the Dockers. A deal of tact was called for, but after a while all the difficulties were surmounted.

COTTON OPERATIVES.

The first and most serious undertaking brought to the committee was the strike of the Cotton Operatives. With no union or funds behind them these workers appealed to the committee for advice and support. The committee asked Miriam Daniell and H. H. Gore to interview the employing company, of which Sir Jos. D. Weston was chairman; but the directors whilst willing to make concessions on some points were adamant on the question of wages, and intimated that if the operatives insisted they would have to close the works.

Resulting from this interview and a consideration of the whole position, the committee put it to an operatives' meeting that it would be well to accept such concessions as were now obtainable; and explained to them that they could not expect sufficient public support to maintain them for a long strike. The vote was almost unanimous, however, against going back. The committee then intimated that they would not forsake them but do their utmost to raise funds and assist in every possible way. A desperate struggle ensued in which Miriam Daniell and Helena Born, Robt. Weare, Irving, Gore and Watson took "lion's shares."

More processions through the city headed by volunteer bands, were arranged for the purpose of collecting funds and putting the whole position before the public at meetings. As this became better known much public sympathy with the operatives was engendered and collection boxes well filled. Several Trade Unions, including Carpenters, Engineers, Dockers, Gas Workers, Boiler Makers and Miners gave liberal donations.

Sunday mornings the strikers, with clean white aprons and shawls over their heads paraded to various places of worship, such as Christchurch, St. Paul's Clifton, Highbury Chapel, etc., and this all helped focus public attention.

Support of nonconformist ministers was sought and resulted in a couple of meetings with them through the medium of a Bristol Ministers' Fraternal Society, but the

divines showed very little sympathy, and several of them advised the committee to persuade the operatives to "go back to work."

The Revs. T. W. Harvey and J. R. Graham both took a different view from this—as to the duty of the church, and supported the strikers' demands; and the Rev. J. W. Trebilco assisted in relief of cases of distress, whilst Miss Priestman, an "advanced" Liberal churchwoman, opened a soup kitchen and every day gave the committee fifty tickets for distribution amongst the needy.

The proprietors of the Star Music Hall (Broadmead), and Joe Baker's Show (which was visiting the city) gave performances on behalf of the funds, as did the St. Agnes' Dramatic Society.

Economic pressure was brought to bear on the employers by the Bristol dockers who refused to handle some goods sent to them by the company for shipment, and the company had the consignment transferred to Liverpool to be shipped from that port—but it met with a like fate at the hands of the Liverpool dockers.

The strike, however, proved a wearisome business. Poverty and privation existed amongst the operatives, but they would not countenance giving in. Several interviews between the committee and the company took place, and at the end of November an offer was made by the directors in reply to a categorical statement of the operatives' demands. It conceded practically all except the advance in wages which they regretted they could not give at present, "but should the condition of the company's business in the future allow of it they will still be prepared to consider an advance, and in order to show their desire to meet the workpeople they are willing to pay wages for three holidays in the year—3 full days—one at Christmas, one at Eastertide, one at Whitsuntide, to all people who after these three holidays return punctually to their work."

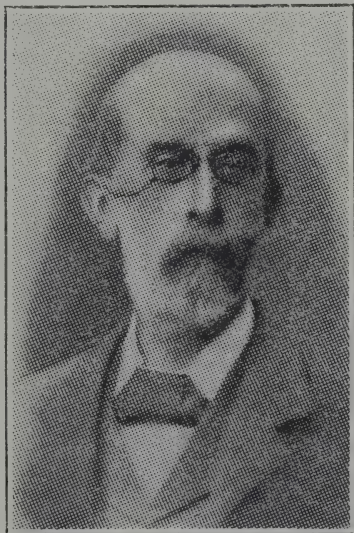
A meeting of the strikers was called at the Russell Town Congregational Chapel, and differences of opinion as to acceptance roused some excitement, but by a majority this course was decided upon. The strike had lasted over a month, and altogether the committed distributed £600 in relief. During this time they were also

handling other disputes, as mentioned in the following report, issued from "The British Workman," in March, 1890.

"THE BRISTOL LABOUR REVOLT"

against the tyranny of Capitalism was the logical outcome of the successful campaigns of the London Gas Stokers and Dockers, and was the first utterance by the mass of the people of the socialistic truths, that 'if any will not work neither shall he eat,' and that the workers must have the full result of their labour. With very few exceptions the workers gained honourable victories, their demands being indisputably just and merely a tithe of their rights. The speedy settlements of the disputes were no doubt due to their firm front and united stand, and in many cases advances were given by the employers owing to the general agitation without the cruel necessity of strikes.

"The first strike occurred at Lysaght's Galvanised Iron Works, and this was followed in varying succession by Tinn's Galvanised Iron Workers, the Gas Workers, Dockers, Stay Makers, Cotton Oper-



F. GILMORE BARNETT

(Gave valuable help to Bristol Dockers and other "new unionists.")

atives, Brush Makers, Hatters, Oil and Colour Workers, Pipe Makers, Coal Carriers, Scavengers, Box Makers, Cigar Makers, Tramway-men, Hauliers, Blue Factory Workers, Animal Charcoal Workers, etc., etc.

"A leading feature of the movement has been the organisation of unskilled labour of all kinds into Trades Unions, the people remembering that liberty is never gained for ever, but is constantly liable to attacks if not jealously guarded. This has also arisen from the recognition by the worker that the tendency is for the rise in wages to be almost counter-balanced by the rise in prices, but that they must intelligently discuss and arrange their future crusade and protect their immediate trade interests by allying themselves to the powerful New Trades Unionism.

The feeling of unity which has arisen between skilled and unskilled workers, and the replacement of mere selfishness in the individual by the ideal of the brotherhood of all men and women, and their banding together in the common cause of love to Humanity and God is another important gain.

"Finally, it is worthy of special notice that throughout the strikes there were, in spite of aggravating circumstances, scarcely any cases of violence, a result due in part to the intelligent discipline of the people, the wise forbearance of the police and their strict adherence to duty, as well as to the sympathy with, and careful organisation of, the workers by the Strike Committee."

Attached to this report is a balance sheet, audited by J. R. Graham (Vicar of St. Jude's, Bristol), and W. Baster (St. Stephen Street, Bristol) showing an income—

	£	s.	d.
Box Collections	339	16	3½
Sheet Collections	69	5	11
Private and other Subs....	84	17	0
Subs. from Factories			
Trade Societies, etc.	395	16	0½

£889 15 3

and expenditure—

Relief Granted	844	15	0
Working Expenses	38	13	1
Balance handed to Organ-			
ising Committee	6	7	2

£889 15 3

Several similar statements were issued in connection with some of the strikes mentioned as well as one by the first branch of the Gas Workers and General Labourers' Union that was formed in the city in November, '89.

DOCKERS AND OTHERS.

Outside the Strike Committees' surview, but contemporary, were strikes of Dockers and Gas Workers, and a lock-out of Boot and Shoe Operatives.

In connection with the former, three men were charged under the Vagrancy Act with begging. It transpired that they were fraudulently using collecting boxes, ostensibly for the workers on strike, but using the proceeds for their own purposes. H. H. Gore prosecuted for the Dockers' Union, and the men were sent to prison, two for six weeks, and one for 21 days.

A variety of unusual events were associated with the strike of Hatters. One was the printing and free circulation by the committee of

A BLACK LIST

in the form of a handbill which read:

"The dispute at Howes' Hat Factory is still unsettled, not for any question of wages, but because Howes Bros. say that those who have taken a leading part in the strike shall be sacked. All the employees pledged themselves to stand together, and all received strike pay. The following have deserted their fellow workers, and have gone back to work, and did not care if the comrades who had done most for them suffered in consequence: *Here follows in bold type the full names and addresses of eleven men and two women.*

"If you happen to know any of these men, will you tell them how ungenerous they have been?"

"These men were the first to lead their brothers and sisters out on strike."

Sometime previously, one of the women hatters on strike had, through a love affair, attempted suicide by jumping from the Clifton Suspension Bridge, but was saved from death by the wind catching her skirts and causing them to act as a parachute, and brought her safely to earth. The vicissitudes of life!

PROSECUTIONS AND PENALTIES.

Prosecutions and convictions for illegal incidents also occurred in connection with this strike, and what follows illustrates the feeling of the committee towards similar cases. At the Ropewalk, on Saturday, December 7th, '89, John Gregory, Fitzpatrick, and others, spoke 'whilst rain fell in torrents,' protesting against the infliction of fine and costs to the extent of £4 17s. 0d. on a female hat works employee for "a technical assault"—"knocking the foreman's hat off," was how one described it.

Three men named Phelps, Purnell and Webb were also convicted for "an act of violence" during progress of the dispute. These men tried to prevent some others entering the works at 4 o'clock in the morning "to finish some work which might spoil if left undone." Each was sentenced to a month's imprisonment. "A miscarriage of justice" the committee termed this, and called a mass protest meeting for the following Sunday. Dan Irving presided, and speeches were made by Gore, Vincent, Watson and Vickery, to a resolution, which the meeting approved: "strongly denouncing the cruel conduct of the magistrates in sentencing to one month's imprisonment with hard labour, three working men for only doing their duty to their fellows, and emphatically condemns the bias displayed by these magistrates in committing these men against the weight of evidence in their favour."

Arrangements were made, to, as far as possible, provide for the imprisoned men's families.

On the men's release from Horfield Prison (New Year's Day, 1890) they were greeted by loud cheers from a crowd of 300 people assembled at the gates to meet them. Forming a procession, humans with ropes taking the places of the horses in the break waiting for the "ex-prisoners' accommodation," and accompanied by bands which played lively tunes, the whole proceeded to the Ropewalk. There another mass meeting was held. All the people were in high spirits, and a further resolution was carried condemnatory of "class" magistrates. The Bench was still void of anyone representing the view point of the struggling masses, and without that anything of an all round

or, at best, a "technically" just decision was impossible. "Justice" is more than an interpretation of the written law. "Good men should not obey the *Laws* too well," wrote Emerson.

Many non-unionists allied themselves with the strikers, and a song by John Gregory, to the air *Men of Harlech*, was printed and sold for their benefit. Entitled

BATTLE SONG OF LABOUR.

this is the first of four verses:

Brother men for labour banding,
With your valour praise commanding,

In the front of battle standing,

For the rights of men.

Keep your courage ever;

Let no discord sever

Man from man, on! while ye can

For justice now or never.

Let the maid, the wife, the mother,

Scorn the scab that wrongs a

brother;

Pass their names to one another,

Gallant Union Men!

Amongst several who were attracted to the movement by the vigorous campaign of the new unionism with its Socialist aims was

W. R. OXLEY.

A Sunday School teacher and keen religious worker, he felt the churches and chapels to be out of harmony with the teachings of Christianity, so he left those bodies to work amongst the people in furtherance of the ideals of brotherhood and justice, and every moment he could give for the remainder of his life was devoted to an uncompromising socialist propaganda. An enthusiast



W. R. OXLEY
(died 1920), with wife, daughter
(Edith) and son (Stanley).

amongst enthusiasts, he never thought of himself, and was tireless in the advocacy of what he conceived to be true. Often crowds were hostile, particularly during the jingo days of the Boer War, but he was a most persuasive speaker and frequently turned angry opponents into silent listeners. "Greatheart" was a term Mrs. Rose E. Sharland used in describing him, and the word was well chosen. It is doubtful whether any one man in Bristol made more, if as many, converts to the socialist faith. Further, he had an amazing gift of enrolling them as active workers in the cause.

"He saw the vision. He beheld the land of far distances, and with a brave heart pressed forward to it, and we were glad to follow."

Another acquisition was

ENID STACY.

Early in life she combined a quick Celtic imagination with a logical brain. When a pupil at Redland High School she was referred to by one of the mistresses as "a brilliant worker," and is said to have shared with a mistress there a love of Ruskin, Robert Browning's poems, and "High Church." In due course she took her degree (Cambridge) and became a High School teacher.

Her brother Paul had for some

time been prominent with the Christian Socialist Society, and with him she was a regular communicant at All Saints, Clifton.

An appearance there of a strike procession of women "wet and desperate after many weeks of sullen holding out for even a right to combine," made a deep impression on her mind. Soon she was literally tramping the soles off her boots busily engaged making collections and organising work of every description—particularly interested was she in work having to do with the organisation of women into trade unions. Her father was an artist, and the Stacy studio became one of the regular meeting places of socialists. Says one of them, "It still lingers in my memory as some enchanted Hall of Dreams. There was music and song and dance. Enid's sisters were wonderful dancers. How proud she was of their beauty! The Guild of St. Mathew was working hard under the Rev. Stewart Headlam to release Britain from its Puritan ban on dancing and the stage generally. Enid's sisters' dancing was for us a solemn rite.

"Night after night bands of socialists, young and old, would meet for study and debate, and terribly practical work, too, for the unemployed and unskilled workers. . .

"Never did our meetings break up without our singing one of Morris's songs to a crooning Irish melody—I think 'The Message of the March Wind' to the tune of 'Teddy O'Neill' was the favourite."

At this time Enid never dreamed of being a speaker—to work in any way for the coming socialism was reward enough—but this came later. Then scandalised ladies heard of her activities and with it her career as a High School teacher ended. But this did not dim her enthusiasm for the cause. Her work and influence reached all parts of the country.

During the election campaign of J. Ramsay Macdonald at Southampton, in 1896, she met the Rev. Percy Widdrington, whom she afterwards married. The strain of the incessant work of those busy years, however, took its toll, and in 1903 she died at the early age of 35.

Two others worthy of special mention were Miss Gertrude Dix (the authoress of *The Image Breakers*, and *The Girl from the Farm*), and Miss C. E. May. The latter should



ENID STACY.

"Essentially a Pioneer." Died 1903.

not, perhaps, be described as a socialist, but she did a wonderful work in connection with working women's movements.

Behind the speakers were a number of publicly unknown men and women who, in a different way, did equally valuable work. The names of Frank Mills, Mary Wheeler, J. Sainsbury, S. A. Day, T. S. Knight, W. Payne, come to mind; but there were many more.

ANOTHER COUNCILLOR.

Following on their School Board success, the socialists were very keen on contesting a Council seat, and Robt. Weare with Dan Irving approached Gore with a view to his consent to nomination. Gore had no desire for this and declined, but meetings of the electors of St. Philip's South urging him to come forward, he eventually accepted their invitation. He issued a very brief address—"... my policy is ... distinctly socialist, and if I am chosen by you as your representative on the Council, I trust you will not be disappointed with the work of your socialist member."

At the same elections (November, 1889) the Labour League again ran Albert Vincent for the St. Paul's Ward, where Mr. J. Coulthard (Lib.) was seeking re-election. Vincent favoured city ownership of water, etc., the provision of public parks, and dealt mainly with Labour's general interests. The close contest of the previous November justified a hope for victory, but the result was Vincent's poll dropping to 362, and Coulthard's increasing to 793. Speaking afterwards Vincent said they must not be downhearted. "They had all been so busily engaged in the strikes and lock-outs and were not able to hold meetings or give time to municipal matters."

South St. Philip's, however, told a different tale. Here the labour troubles roused the people to great election fervour. Two candidates were nominated besides Gore—Mr. J. Dole, the retiring Councillor, and Mr. W. H. Cowlin. The latter withdrew too late for his name to be deleted from the ballot papers, but he made it quite clear to the electors that he did not wish them to vote for him, and this they understood. The poll was declared—

H. H. Gore	1293
J. Dole	465
W. H. Cowlin	13

Socialist majority ... 828

Mr. Dole had represented the ward for six years, and the result was a surprise to everyone. Gore was carried shoulder high round the ward. He was the first avowed socialist to be elected to the City Council. All sections of the Labour Party were exceedingly glad—no one more so than Tovey, who welcomed the appearance of "No. 2" through the door of the sanctum.

This was not the first assault on South St. Philip's. Two years earlier (1887) Geo. Belsten had carried the flag for the Labour League, and polled 617 votes against 960 for the Liberal. (Wm. Butler).

FIRST LABOUR DAY.

The International Congress decision of '89 to hold simultaneous demonstrations of workers in all countries on May Day, became operative on May the first, 1890. Processions and open air meetings were held in Belgium and many other countries, but in some, notably Austria, Germany, France, and Denmark, official Government interference was encountered.



R. B.
CUNNINGHAM
GRAHAM, M.P.
(Spoke at first
Labour Day
Demonstration in
Bristol, 1890).

British labour generally preferred the first Sunday in May to the actual May Day, and great demonstrations were held in Hyde Park and elsewhere.

Bristol workers may well be proud that they participated in this international movement at its inception. It happened that the recently formed branch of the Gas Workers and General Labourers' Union were keen, and through their Secretary, Robt. Nicol, intimated their desire that the Organising Committee take it up.

THE ORGANISING COMMITTEE.

To be clear, it should be explained that when the Strike Committee's labour ceased, it replaced itself by a more permanent "Organising Committee," which first met at New Street Coffee House (January 4th, 1890). Dan Irving was in the chair, and the personnel changed but little, but it set itself the task of organising workers, and more particularly the "unskilled" and women workers, into unions, and to inculcating Socialist opinions into those bodies. For several years it did a big work.

WORTH A CROWN?

One of its sub-committees was popularly termed "the five-bob committee," its membership being composed of five "Bobs"—Robt. Weare, Robt. Nicol, Robt. Gilliard, Robt. Sharland, and Robt. Tovey—who, as a wag remarked, "as often as not couldn't raise *one* between them!"

At one with the Gas Workers on this Labour Day project, were the committee, but they deemed the Trades Council the right body to take the lead. Time, however, was short—April 16th now, and the Council not due to meet for another eight days—so a sub-committee was appointed, with the Trades Council's president (R. G. Tovey) as secretary, to advance arrangements for a Sunday demonstration, and to save time the unions were sent direct communications. Many replied favourably although these mostly regretted the short notice as making it almost too late for members to organise a creditable turn-out. Some objections were voiced to a Sunday procession as offending religious sentiment, and the Trades Council underlined this in stipulating that if the event occurred *on the Saturday* they would do all they could to make it successful.

It was therefore changed to the Saturday, which alteration enabled R. B. Cunningham Graham, M.P., and Mrs. Eleanor Marx Aveling, who were attending the Sunday celebration in London, to accept invitations to visit Bristol. Mrs. Aveling (a daughter of Karl Marx) wrote, she "would gladly come and speak, but was so poor that only if her railway fare was sent in advance was it possible." The Committee sent thirty shillings, and after the meeting she handed ten back to the

treasurer, a beautiful expression of enthusiasm and comradeship.

JOHN CURLE.

One of the locals asked to speak was John Curle, of the Amalgamated Society of Carpenters and Joiners. He replied, "... I am heartily in sympathy with the movement, and shall do my best to make the demonstration a success, but I am afraid you are asking too much of me to address such a vast audience as I hope will be assembled at the Downs on Saturday." This is the John Curle who afterwards became so prominent in the life of the city, and ended a long and honourable career as Bristol's third Labour Lord Mayor (1927-28).

PROCESSION AND SPEECHES.

Harold Brabham, Albt. Vincent, R. Weare, R. G. Tovey, R. Sharland, John Sharland, J. Watts Treasure, and Frank Mills were appointed marshalls, and the procession of Trade Unionists and Socialists, accompanied by bands of music, and with banners and flags flying, left the Ropewalk at 3 o'clock, marched up Old Market Street, Castle Street, and Clare Street. From Jim Marshall's window in Peter Street, Mr. Hy. E. Stacy (the artist father of Paul and Enid) jestingly, but truthfully remarked, "There goes the procession, winding its way like a serpent through the narrow streets, but the sting is in its tail!" He referred to the group of Socialists, who, with their red flag, came in at its end.

At the Drawbridge, a strong reinforcement of dockers and sailors and firemen joined. Proceeding *via* Park Street and Whiteladies Road, the public followed, and it was a procession of considerable dimensions that reached the Downs. There huge crowds surrounded the two platforms. For about ten minutes a slight shower of rain fell, but the spirit of the demonstrators was not damped.

F. Gilmore Barnett and R. G. Tovey were the respective chairmen, and local speakers were supported by Tom McCarthy (Dockers) at No. 1 platform, and at No. 2, by Mrs. Aveling.

Mrs. Aveling, a charming personality, made a stirring appeal, and Cunningham Graham, who spoke at both platforms, referred to the

days when "Edmund Burke was a member for the city. Now, if they put up a rich party man, and put a turnip on his head, scooped it out, and put on it Conservative or Liberal, the workers of Bristol would run into the polling booths like bees out of a hive (applause and 'no's'); although in their workmen's clubs they would denounce the candidate as a sweater or a humbug. They would throw their hats into the air, knowing all the time that no matter what he called himself, Liberal or Tory, 'like will be like,' or, as they say in the north country, 'hawk dinna pick oot hawk's een.' Workmen would combine and send their own men to Parliament."

The resolution (carried with but three dissentients) affirmed, "... that the long hours of labour ... is the chief cause of the unemployed; believes in reducing the hours of labour to a maximum of 48 per week; cordially greets our fellow workers in every country, and calls upon the Imperial Government and all local governing bodies to fix at once these hours in all departments of labour under their control," and was supported by all the speakers in a telling way.

OTHERS' OPINIONS.

Seeking an all-embracing celebration, the committee invited some other bodies to take part, *e.g.*, the Irish League, also the local M.P.s.

The Irish Nationalist League (Bristol Branch), through its Hon. Sec. (Mr. W. M. Byrne), sent a real Irish letter, thanking the committee for the kind invitation and regretting its inability to participate *as a body* "although heartily sympathising with the objects of the meeting and wishing it every success."

The members of Parliament were equally courteous but less helpful. Mr. W. H. Wills "only returned to town last week" and was "unable to be in Bristol on the day in question," whilst Mr. Lewis Fry "regretted" he should not be able to take part in the proposed demonstration.

Mr. Chas. Townsend and Mr. Handel Cossham were more communicative. The former wrote, "... I am in sympathy with the movement for an eight-hour day, but I cannot see my way to legislation which would absolutely prohibit men in all trades from working longer than this if they wished to

do so. In the case of underground miners and other dangerous occupations I should support a bill for the restriction of the hours of labour. Why do you fix Sunday for your meeting? Surely Saturday afternoon would be much better." And the latter, "I cannot be with you on May 4th. My Sundays are sacred to home and duties that I consider more in harmony with the day. I find no fault with those who think otherwise. . . . Relative to the hours movement, my views and my practice are in favour of short hours of labour, but I am not in favour of regulating the hours of adult labour by law, and I am quite sure the great body of intelligent working men see the dangers of allowing Parliament to do that which they are so well able to do for themselves. . . . I cannot support the regulation of the hours of labour by law."

This letter, dated April 22nd, 1890, must have been one of the last penned by Mr. Handel Cossham, as his death occurred on the following day.

E. J. WATSON contributed a song to this international movement—

"EIGHT HOURS FOR EVERY WORKER."

(Air—"The British Grenadiers.")

Let men be slaves no longer,
But let each one stand free;
Why must we toil in factories,
In mines, on rail, or sea?
Rouse! comrades, rouse! no longer
sweat

Throughout the live-long day;
Demand your rights, let toilers all
Of every nation say—

Chorus—

"Eight hours! Eight hours!
ring out the cry;

"Eight hours for every
worker;

Let eight Hours be the working
day;

And ne'er a man a shirker."

Is rest for idlers only

Who grind and starve the bees;

That they may live like sultans,

In affluence and ease?

Shall workers ne'er have time for
thought,

For pleasure, rest, or play?

With thundering voice, with deaf-
ening roar,

Let men and nations say—

"Eight hours," etc.

Two more verses followed, and the whole was widely distributed in leaflet form.

TRADES COUNCIL AND LABOUR REPRESENTATION.

At this period the political organisation of Labour was very unsettled. Possibly it was the appearance (and success) of the Socialists at the School Board Election that suggested to the Trades Council the advisability of inviting representative working class bodies to send delegates to a conference to consider the position. The Socialists, of course, attended, and through Rogers and Weare explained that the reason of their existence in a separate body was a profound belief in the necessity of a definite socialist objective as essential to the workers' emancipation, but that the object of independent working class representation had their whole support, and that as individuals they had given ample evidence of this in membership-of, and active work for, the League, additional to the public advocacy of the ideal as a body at public meetings.

Events on the industrial plane had kept every labour sympathiser so busy, however, that the consideration of political organisation was held up.

BRISTOL EAST.

It was to the Organising Committee—the existing centre of advanced labour activity—that the task of considering the parliamentary vacancy in Bristol East fell, and “to contest the seat with a working man ‘candidate’” was its first decision. Two names were suggested—Dan Irving and Wm. Whitefield (the Miners' Agent).

A Mr. Pottow, who was usually active with the Liberal Party, intimated through Gore that on this occasion a Labour candidate might meet with Liberal approval. Tovey, Weare, Gore, Watson and Vickery were appointed to see this gentleman, which they did next day, but the mere mention of the names of Irving and Whitefield showed that Liberal support was not at all likely for men of their independent calibre, and the interview closed by an intimation that the Labour Party would run a candidate “of their own choosing.” In the evening the same sub-committee met the “Miners' Com-

mittee” at the Giant's Castle Coffee Tavern. Whitefield had called this meeting at the request of the organising committee, and wrote a letter explaining the position, laying special stress on the fact that if he were selected he would have nothing to do with any party except the Labour Party.

After full discussion the Miners' Committee agreed to Whitefield's nomination and to be responsible for his election expenses, which, it was estimated, would be about £150. This, and a report from R. G. Tovey, that the Trades Council had by resolution approved of Whitefield as Labour Candidate, decided the committee to unanimously adopt Whitefield as parliamentary candidate. The decision was made public and the campaign bid fair to be very successful; but many trades unionists were still unconverted to the necessity of Labour representation, and were also much divided on “political” points. One union official (Mr. R. Howell) wrote excusing himself “as the distance from home is too great for me,” and he proceeded, “*I also read that Mr. Whitefield is in favour of Home Rule for Ireland which to my mind means dismemberment of our Empire. Therefore I cannot agree with him on that question.*”

“As a City Councillor” (for St. Philip) “and schoolboard member,” Gore issued handbills at his own expense, urging the electors of that district to vote for Whitefield.

The vacancy occurred whilst all were busy occupied in organising the Labour Day Demonstration, and the extra work, thought and energy expended proved very exhausting. Toll was taken on the Friday evening by Whitefield being so overcome by a nervous illness that he was compelled to leave Bristol for rest, and retire from the contest, but this was not the last word.

Tempers of others, already ruffled by the strain, became torn. Speaking at the Saturday Demonstration, Gore said he hoped the workers would now vote for Mr. Inskip (the Tory). This caused Tovey to write to the press, expressing his astonishment, and saying that he and the Trades Council had no sympathy with this personal opinion of Gore's.

Next day (Sunday) Jas. Kirkpatrick with two others waited on the committee to say that Mr. J.

Havelock Wilson was willing to become their candidate, and that the Seamen's and Firemen's Union would pay the expenses. The committee met Wilson and his friends several times and considered it well, but finally decided (with two dissentients and two neutral votes) not to enter the contest. The reasons, recorded in the minutes, were:

"The great responsibility of being parties to the spending of a large sum of working men's money on what might prove prejudicial rather than good to the Labour cause. . . The little time left in which to fight, and there being no other available candidate but Mr. Wilson whom the committee was not sufficiently acquainted with to adopt."

Despite this, Mr. Wilson decided to go to the poll, and on the principle of "supporting one's class" Harold Brabham and Watts Treasure worked on his behalf. Without an official Labour backing the candidature proved unpopular and evoked much working class hostility. J. Watts Treasure, whom none would accuse of faintheartedness, wrote, "... returning home after the declaration of the poll, the shoemakers and colliers simply buried us with turf and stones. All the glass of the cab was broken, and we were all glad when we reached quieter quarters."

About 1 in 12 of the recorded votes were for Wilson:

Sir Jos. Weston (Lib.)...4,775

Jas. Inskip (Con.) 1,900

J. H. Wilson (Ind.) 602

The outcome of the Labour Representation Conference called by the Trades Council was the

BRISTOL LABOUR EMANCIPATION LEAGUE

in place of the Labour League which had ceased to function. With R. G. Tovey as hon. sec., and R. S. Gilliard hon. treasurer, the new body promulgated:

"The economic and political emancipation of the workers by returning to Parliament and local governing bodies persons pledged to the programme of the League, and by any other method conducive to such emancipation," as its aim, and issued a programme that vied in length with the S.D.F.s list of palliatives, including Adult Suffrage, Abolition of the House of Lords and all Hereditary Authorities, Free

Education with one free meal a day for school children, a legal maximum 48-hour week, Nationalisation of Land, Mines, Docks, Railways, etc.

The whole was a big advance on anything the Labour League had set out, and showed the line of Labour's development.

A CLIFTON AND BRISTOL FABIAN SOCIETY

joined the Socialist Society during the summer of '91 in holding propaganda meetings at Eastville Park and other spots. At one of these Dr. Aveling and his wife, Eleanor Marx (of London) came to speak, and Sam Hobson, who had accepted a post in the city which lasted some time, also joined the B.S.S., and helped considerably.

The national body of the Fabian Society, "consisting of Socialists," as they described themselves, concentrated on educating the public by means of the spoken and written word, in Socialist principles. A list of ninety lecturers "who offer their services gratuitously," was compiled, and during the year ending March, '91, these individuals delivered upwards of 1,400 lectures between them. This was supplemented by the issue of numerous booklets, etc., at cheap rates, all written in simple language and readable style, elucidating the problems and needs of the time. The chief of these was the widely read *Fabian Essays* by Bernard Shaw, Annie Besant, Sidney Webb, etc., and one of the pamphlets, "Fabian Tract No. 18," was published conjointly with the local Society. Entitled *Facts for Bristol*, 'twas an exhaustive collection of statistical and other facts relating to the city, with suggestions for reform on Socialist principles. It summarised public administration in Bristol as "a confused and perplexing tangle of unco-ordinated authorities, exercising diverse and ill-defined powers over varying and over-lapping areas, elected on different franchises, at different dates, with different qualifications for membership. One public body spends money in opposing the projects of another. The poor rate varies from street to street within what is virtually one town. . . Lack of public spirit due largely to lack of knowledge of public affairs, is the inevitable result of this confusion."

Nearly all that has, of course, now been remedied, but in principle at any rate, another of its comments still applies, viz :

"Bristol is in many respects the most backward of English municipalities." Referring to Bristol's water, gas and trams, it continued, "Bristol enjoys the bad pre-eminence of being the largest provincial municipality which allows all three to remain in private hands for private advantage. Bristol can borrow capital at $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. If the capital of these companies had been municipal stock at $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., instead of private investments at an average of 6 per cent., the inhabitants of Bristol would be saving £50,000 per annum, representing a rate of one shilling in the pound."

Twenty pages for a penny,

"FACTS FOR BRISTOL"

was chock full of information and sound advice. It had a large sale and was a boon to municipal reformers in general and to Socialist propagandists in particular. Lack of funds, however, strictly limited Labour and Socialist electoral work.

Tovey was re-elected, with an increased majority, to the City Council, for St. Paul's in 1890, defeating Follwell by 643 votes to 511, but at a by-election in the same ward a month later Wm. Baster secured only 275 votes for Labour—third in a field of five, Herbert Ashman, a very popular Liberal, coming first with 874 votes, and J. W. Lane (Cons.) second with 340. Quite a number of working men felt "one" representative to be their "due," but to ask for more "unfair," and through the handicap of poverty even that one was soon to be denied them. Council meetings and duties absorb a lot of time, and this made such inroads upon Tovey's earnings that in justice to his family he was reluctantly compelled to resign in the month of March, '91. No Labour nominee could be found who was able to stand this drain, so the first Council seat won by Labour had to be surrendered, and it went back to the Liberals (Heber Mardon). Labour's representation was thus left to the Socialist Gore who retained his seat at the '92 election by a big majority :

Gore Soc.) 1,008

Cowlin (Lib.) 429

and for nearly three years he held

the position single-handed until he was joined by John Sharland and Frank Sheppard in November, 1893.

At the January, '92, School Board Election, Albert Vincent and Jas. Vickery were with the unsuccessful, but Gore was again second (12,370 votes), and twelfth on the list Wm. Whitefield (Miners') with 7,640 votes GAINED A SEAT.

MILITANT TRADE UNIONISM.

One of the biggest and earliest successes of the "new" unionism in Bristol was in connection with the Gas Workers. Will Thorne, M.P., graphically describes it in his book, *My Life's Battles* (Geo. Newnes, Ltd., 3/6) :

"... I received a letter from a gas worker in Bristol named Vickery—he was acting on behalf of the Gas Workers there who wanted to form a branch of the union. A branch was formed in September ('89), and I was called down to Bristol to deal with a situation that had arisen. A big agitation had been going on at the three works to secure the eight-hour day: the hours were twelve, and the conditions very bad. A gang of stokers had to draw and charge 25 retorts per day, seven days a week for 30/-. These men wanted an increase of 5/- per week. The labourers, who only received 17/9 per week, had to work from 6 a.m. to 5.30 p.m. for the first five days of the week, and from 6 a.m. until 2 p.m. on Saturdays. These men wanted 21/- a week and the eight-hour day. No progress could be made. On October 7th the men at all three gas works came out on strike. The works were picketed. Blacklegs were brought in. The pickets saw one lot, spoke to them and they went home.

"One man came in a cab, with his bag, a sailor; we told him that trouble was on, and he went away. We had a way of telling them. The pickets who were doing scout duty reported that a number of blacklegs were coming along Coronation Road on their way to the Canons Marsh works. A big crowd waited for them on College Green, but the blacklegs turned off in another direction. They were in brakes. The first load eluded the crowd, but the second brake-load was stopped. 'Free labour,' as it was called, was taken in cabs to other works. This did not

please the strikers and their many friends. Hundreds of people turned out, and brakes and cabs were overturned, and several of the strike-breakers were thrown into the river. Many fights took place near the works, and several of our men were prosecuted. At one of the works a brake-load of men only got in with the aid of a detachment of fifty policemen. The police, knowing the conditions the men worked under, were fairly sympathetic. One of the officials had his top hat knocked in; he offered £10 reward to anyone who would tell him who did it, but he could not find out. Despite the introduction of a few blacklegs to break the strike, our efforts to hold up the works were effective. The men's leaders were sent for and were told that the directors were prepared to concede the men's claims; the blacklegs were to be cleared out of the works, and none of the strikers were to be victimised. The big gasometers were very low and nearly empty, which meant that the town would soon be in darkness, and only then did the directors realise the value of the workers' labour.

"The men resumed work the same day as the settlement, and by the time the night shift came on duty the retorts were charged and the works in full blast. During the strike a marquee had been erected in the works for the accommodation of the strike breakers. Large quantities of meat, beer, tobacco, and different food had been brought in. The strikers, when they resumed work, made short work of what was left. This was the second important eight-hour day victory of the gas workers that had only become possible by organisation, backed up with unity and determination."

KATHARINE ST. JOHN CONWAY.

It has already been indicated that these industrial uprisings made a great impression on many humanitarians. Katharine St. John Conway (who later became Mrs. J. Bruce Glasier), who came to Bristol and took an appointment at Redland High School as a mistress in classics, was deeply moved by one of them, and has herself told the story.

"... whilst at college (Newnham), under Miss Gladstone's sun-like influence, and the witchery of

the word 'catholic'—universal—she wrote, 'I had been drawn into the High Church movement of the day and was at church in Clifton, when in they came... lassies out on strike against starvation wages and for the right to combine. The church was crowded with a fashionable congregation. . . I had been praying for a fuller consciousness of the Presence, and there they stood, sister-women, if the 'Our Father' were true—ill-clad, wet through with the driving rain, hungry. . . 'They stand between me and the Christ.' So the thought smote me; so I see it still. Never shall any human being, so long as the world suffers wrong, know one moment's real communion with the mind of the Master till they have actually thrown in their lot with the poor and the oppressed.

"'Inasmuch as ye have done it or not done it.' For the first time in my life I heard and began to understand. I had enrolled myself, with hearty gratitude for the kindness of my reception, with the Bristol Socialist Society, veteran propagandists many of them—like the brothers Sharland. The Bristol Socialists were in charge of the strike. Good Robert Weare had led the women into the church. On the



KATHARINE St. JOHN CONWAY
(now Mrs. J. Bruce Glasier)

Monday I went down to the strike rooms to offer what help I could.

"With the dread first-hand revelation of the full meaning of poverty that I gained under their tuition, clearly also they proved it to me :

" 'In a rightly-ordered state of society none of these things need be.' "

"What else thenceforward was worth living for?

"What else is worth living for still?" "

Katharine Conway remained in Bristol for some time after her conversion to the movement, and was an enthusiastic worker in the Socialist Society's ranks.

SUNDAY LECTURES.

Man does not live by bread alone, and in opening the spheres of science and literature to the working class, the Bristol Sunday Society played a big part. This society, officially founded on February 11th, 1889, was preceded by a class of five persons (Robert Weare, Chas. Bennett, Samuel Pritchett, J. W. D. Marshall and R. S. Gilliard), who met regularly on Sunday mornings in the sitting room over J. W. D. Marshall's shop, 16 Peter Street, during the winter of 1887-1888, "to acquire the knowledge of shorthand (under the tuition of Robt. S. Gilliard) and mutual improvement by the study of the writings of the great modern authors such as Carlyle, Emerson, Mazzini, etc."

After a while more time was devoted to the authors than to shorthand, and so much profit and pleasure was obtained from these readings and discussions that it was decided to invite others to join them. Later, in September 1888, it was resolved that "we form ourselves into a society to be named "The Bristol Sunday Society," and a further meeting added the words "established for the mutual improvement in Science and Literature." J. W. D. Marshall was its honorary secretary, and meetings were held at 54 Old Market Street. However, with the passage of a few weeks this room was required for other purposes, and the Society reverted to its former meeting place.

In January 1889, some members queried whether the Society could not inaugurate or form itself into a larger Society. Enquiries followed, and amongst those who earliest ex-

pressed sympathy with the project were Messrs. H. W. Twigg, Wm. Baster, J. H. Holbrook, and W. H. Hawkes. The upshot was a conference called at the Castle Coffee Room, Castle Street, on Monday, February 11th, 1889. There was a good attendance, and H. W. Twigg was voted to the chair. The Revs. J. M. Wilson, H. N. Blakeford, T. W. Harvey, and Mordaunt Crofton were amongst those who sent messages of sympathy with the proposal, and that evening the Bristol Sunday Society was founded: "To provide for the delivery on Sundays in Bristol, and to encourage the delivery elsewhere, of lectures on Science (Physical, Intellectual and Moral), History, Literature, and Art, especially in their bearing on the improvement and social well being of mankind."

Mr. H. W. Twigg became its first chairman, and many socialists associated themselves with its early work. Wm. Baster, Miriam Daniell, H. H. Gore, D. Irving, W. J. Petherick, B. J. Watson, and R. Weare were on its first committee of fourteen, whilst R. S. Gilliard was joint honorary secretary with J. Spratt. Public meetings were held at the St. James' Hall, Cumberland Street, the opening lecture being on April 7th, 1889, by Wm. Lant Carpenter, Esq., B.A., B.Sc., M.I.E.E., who spoke on "The Sun."

THE SOCIALIST INFLUENCE

was shown in the lecture lists which during the second session included Prince Kropotkin and Geo. Bernard Shaw, the latter speaking on "Socialism in Real Life." Both reappeared in the next series (1890-1891) and in subsequent lists were such representative advanced thinkers of the time as Rev. Stewart Headlam, Annie Besant, Joseph Hyder, R. B. Haldane, Q.C., M.P., and Graham Wallas, etc., who gave addresses on thought provoking topics. Sergius Stepniak spoke on "Nihilism! The Russian Revolutionary Movement," and Felix Volkovskiy told "How I Escaped to Freedom."

With the aim of always preaching the definite Socialist message, however, the Socialist Society commenced in the early nineties a series of Sunday evening meetings, in the Shepherds' Hall, Old Market Street. An effect of this transference of

Socialist interest to the Shepherds' Hall was apparent in the Sunday Society's lecture lists which tended to become more academically literary and scientific than socialistic, but the Society had an undoubted mission and continued to grow. Meantime, week by week, at the Socialist meetings in the Shepherds' Hall, either a local or national speaker gave lectures on some phase of Socialist thought. The addresses were always preceded by a good musical programme and followed by discussion. For many winters these continued, and they have been referred to as the greatest socialist educational force the city has at any time possessed. Certain is it that around that centre the movement extended in a record way.

For the 1898-1899 session the Sunday Society rented the Empire Theatre (Old Market Street), and the previous average attendance of 300 to 500 was increased that winter to 1,700. On May 10th, 1899, the Society added to its objects :

"... to arrange for the performance of vocal and instrumental music of a high class, and to advocate the Sunday opening of Museums, Art Galleries, and the Reading Rooms of Public Libraries upon condition that no officer shall be required to attend on more than six days per week, and that any who have conscientious objections shall be exempt from Sunday duty."

The Sunday Society performs no great public work now, but in its day it did considerable pioneer work of educational value.

TWO PUBLIC RIGHTS

were legally confirmed in 1891—rights of way and rights of public meeting.

The first had reference to a footpath leading through St. Anne's Wood, Brislington, from a ferry that crossed the Avon from the bottom of Blackswarth Road. The path was closed, and the Bristol and District Footpaths Preservation Society (F. J. Fry, president, and H. Russell Thomas with Richard Tuckett joint honorary secretaries), decided to assert the public right of way. This was done in June and November, '88, through several of its members whose names were published in the newspapers and forwarded to the owner of the property. The sequel appeared on March 20th, 1891, in the

form of a judgment by Henry W. Verey, Official Referee in the High Court of Justice, Chancery Division, between James Sinnott and W. H. Piller, plaintiffs, and R. C. Tuckett, defendant. A brief summary of the finding is that it was "for and in favour of the defendant," and "that the plaintiffs are not, nor is either of them entitled to damages or an injunction against the defendant."

"That there is a public ferry . . . and public footpaths . . . judgment for the defendant against the plaintiffs with costs. . ."

The Society issued a leaflet comprising a copy of the official finding, and a map showing the ferry and footpaths, and added the request. "Anyone who has any complaint to make of the closing of any public paths in the locality should communicate with the society."

RIGHT OF PUBLIC MEETINGS.

The right of holding meetings in public parks was threatened in the Spring of '91, by a movement commenced in the City Council to enact bye-laws prohibiting them. Hearing of this, the Socialist Society, on S. G. Hobson's motion, passed a unanimous resolution of protest, and the chairman of the meeting, R. S. Gilliard, reported that Mr. Chas. Townsend had been asked, and had agreed, to oppose the Council's adoption of the bye-laws. With many other councillors he did this, but unsuccessfully, and the new regulations were sent to the Local Government Board for approval.

The Council's action was thereupon stoutly challenged by many democratically-minded and freedom-loving citizens, who rallied to defend this fundamental right of public parks meetings, and representatives of Radical organisations joined the Labour and Socialist forces for united action.

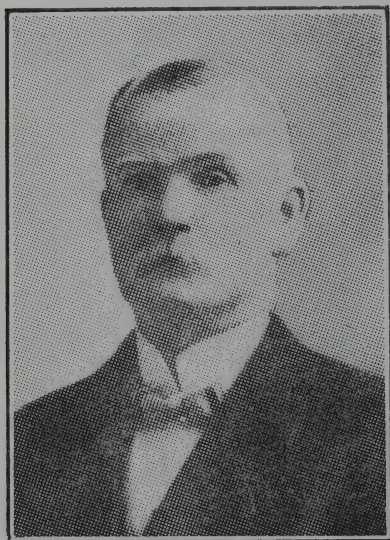
A document was issued, headed "The Right of Public Meetings Committee," which gave the names of Councillor H. W. Twiggs as chairman, John Fox (President Trades Council) vice-chairman, and was signed by Councillor H. H. Gore and Robt. S. Gilliard as hon. secs. It stated, "... By aid of the aldermanic vote, and in spite of the strongest opposition of the majority of the people's representatives, the

City Council adopted a set of proposed bye-laws for the public parks, including prohibition of public meetings in them. . . It is evident that the power which the rising democracy, and especially Trades Unionism, are obtaining, is exciting in the minds of certain sections of all governing bodies in the kingdom a desire to pass and enforce measures of a suppressive and punitive character."

15,000 handbills and 500 window bills were distributed, and in all parts of the city enthusiastic public open-air meetings were held, under the committee's auspices. The Local Government Board was memorialised by the Trades Council, Miners' Association, "the closed Town Councillors," Seamen's Union, Liberal Operatives, and others, to withhold sanction of the bye-laws.

The City Council then modified the proposals by including an "instruction" to the Sanitary Committee "to grant to any person upon application, permission to hold a public meeting in the pleasure

"DOWN WITH THE RAILINGS."



WM. WHITEFIELD.
(Bristol Miners' Agent, 1889-1921.
Councillor and Alderman.
Died 1925).

grounds at Eastville and Windmill Hill at such place thereon as the Committee may approve, provided that no permission be given for holding more than one meeting in the same pleasure ground at the same time." Few objectors were satisfied with this. In fact it stiffened the opposition of most.

At a meeting of the committee, Mr. Whitefield said, "There are two or three thousand miners living around one of the parks, and the Council might pass what resolution it pleased, but they (the miners) will have their meetings. If the Hyde Parks of Bristol are shut against them, then 'down with the railings'!" and to a suggestion that meetings should be subject to regulations of the Watch Committee, W. R. Oxley retorted that "they did not require the assistance of the police whatever."

Gore proposed a motion at the City Council to rescind the resolution, which Gilmore Barnett seconded, and speaking in support, Moss Levy (a radical councillor for North St. Philip's) appealed to the aldermen "who did not visit the parks" to refrain from opposing the motion, and asked "why should they set themselves against the people?" But only one of the aldermen (Smith) voted with Gore, whose motion was lost by the bare majority of one, 17-18.

Gore then moved that a copy of his resolution, together with the numbers in the division, be sent to the President of the Local Governing Board, but the Town Clerk explained there was no precedent for this, and the matter dropped. The "Right of Meetings Committee," who were not concerned with precedent, set one by at once furnishing the Board with full details of the facts as to what had transpired at the Council meeting, which, they added, are "an irresistible reason against the clause becoming law." Correspondence between the Committee and the Board, and the Board and the Town Clerk followed.

Public support for The Right of Public Meetings Committee's claims grew apace, but a meeting in the Horsefair was subject to police interference. Councillor Twiggs was so indignant when he read of this in the Press, that besides trying to see Gore and Gilliard, at once, on his own responsibility, he publicly

announced, by advertisement in the Press and by handbills, his intention to speak at the same spot on the next Wednesday, and had given notice of this intention to the Watch Committee. In due course the meeting was held, more than 800 persons attending, but the police interfered not, it being stated "that the Watch Committee had given no instructions for them to do so."

HELPFUL PRESS LEADER.

A leading article on the matter, appearing in *The Mercury* next day was recorded by the Committee as "considered of real value," and such as "must have gone home to the hearts of many Town Councillors." Peacemakers now mooted, as a compromise, that certain portions of the parks be reserved for meetings. At an executive committee meeting, held at Parker's Vegetarian Restaurant, High Street, on September 30th, Councillor Twiggs said he had made many enquiries, and was inclined to think that a settlement on these lines could be secured, but two opinions prevailed. Some members felt keenly that no restrictions should be agreed to, and others that if sufficient space was reserved *free of conditions*, no more could be reasonably expected.

By a narrow majority the latter view was accepted, and at a general meeting, a few days later, Councillor Twiggs reported an interview with the Town Clerk, and produced plans showing plots which it was now proposed should be allocated for public meetings. Several present thought these spaces insufficient, Mr. Watson remarking that three meetings could not be held on the piece selected in Eastville Park. Mr. R. Sharland then proposed resolutions asking for further spaces both at Eastville and Victoria Park, which J. W. Treasure seconded, and in the end it was agreed "that Mr. Twiggs be requested to take steps to obtain the assent of the Council to the setting apart of the portions selected for public meetings," this to include the extra plots suggested by Mr. Sharland.

A week later a resolution on these lines by Mr. Twiggs was passed by the City Council, and thus the efforts of "The Right of Public Meetings Committee" were crowned with success, and the right of members of the public to hold meetings in

their parks, and to freely express their opinions, was firmly established and legally recognised.

UNITY AND DETERMINATION

were exhibited by young women and girls employed at a Redcliff Confectionery Works (Messrs. Sanders and Sons) in the autumn of 1892. Twice they struck within a few weeks without organisation, and their case was sponsored by the local branch of the Gas Workers' Union and the Bristol Socialist Society, Enid Stacy acting as hon. secretary to the Strike Committee.

On October 17th, a letter appeared in the press complaining of annoyance caused by the strikers whose position was explained by a reply the same day from Enid Stacy.

"... the constant passing up and down, picketing and collection of money is an undoubted annoyance.

"Has it occurred to your correspondent that it is quite as annoying to the strikers to be forced to come out against the conditions imposed by their employers and to thrust their claims upon the public?

"... On September 5th the girls came out to resist the imposition of an extra hour's work a day, excessive fines, locking up during dinner hour, and such like grievances. A settlement was made, and afterwards the girls, seeing that the only means for finally improving their condition lay in combination, formed a branch of the Gas Workers' and General Labourers' Union.

"A fortnight after, one of the girls concerned in the dispute was dismissed. This was followed by a wholesale dismissal of employees to the number of 30 or 40. On October 5th, the majority of the girls determined to work no longer until their comrades had been reinstated and their right of combination established.

"Mr. Sanders has circulated statements to the effect that his wages for the week before last (or so) averaged 6/8½. Supposing this to be so, we cannot congratulate him on the way he treats his people.

"But, as a matter of fact, even these miserable wages are overstated, as they are computed on a full week's work, with overtime, and not the ordinary week of 50 hours.

"To make this clear, we may mention that on Saturday last we paid £22 8s. as strike pay to the 87 girls

affected, giving them their full week's wages and 6d. extra, the average, deducting this latter sum, working out at 4/7½ for a 50 hour week. Less than six girls received 8/-, the majority—many of them grown young women—getting from 3/- to 7/-.

"In face of those facts the girls and those helping them will continue to collect from the public until the full right of combination for defence is won."

PEACE INTERVENTIONS.

There existed at the time a Bristol Board of Conciliation and Arbitration—a product of the Chamber of Commerce and Labour Organisations—of which H. J. Spear and J. Curle were joint honorary secretaries. Unavailing mediatory efforts were made by this body, also by the High Sheriff (Mr. Arthur Baker). To the former Messrs. Sanders wrote on November 5th:

"... the right of our workpeople to belong to a trades union ... is a right which we have never disputed."

To which Enid Stacy immediately wrote the Board in reply, saying, "... the firm had distinctly stated they would have no unionists in their factory. The majority of the girls (84 in number, since increased to about 110) decided to strike work until their comrades were reinstated and the right of combination thus acknowledged. We allege that the fact of thirty or forty spotted girls being discharged (these girls having taken a prominent part in the formation of their trade union) irrefutably supports our argument that the only reason of the strike was the refusal of Messrs. Sanders and Sons to allow their undoubted right of combination. That being asserted by us, and denied by Messrs. Sanders and Sons, defines the points at issue between us and upon which your Board will be asked, on evidence to be produced, to give an opinion.

"Of course, on proof of the girls' case, the reinstatement of all the girls whom we allege were discharged for connecting themselves with a trade union would necessarily come before your Board, this being but the natural outcome of the previous question."

The matter went no further with the Conciliation Board, but a week

later (November 12th), Mr. J. A. Sanders, "at the request of Mr. Arnold Thomas," made a "proposition" through Mr. Gilmore Barnett, "which I trust may lead to a settlement. The factory is at present full, but in order to give evidence of my good faith as regards my willingness to employ unionist girls, I will make room at once for six of the girls now on strike whom I may approve, and who shall have full liberty to retain their connection with the union. I cannot, of course, dismiss the girls at present in my factory to make room for others, but I am quite ready to take old or new girls as I may have room for them, whether belonging to a union or not if in other respects they approve themselves to me.

"I do not think I have been treated very fairly by those who have been representing the union in this case, but in compliance with Mr. Thomas's wishes and in the interests of peace, I am ready to make this concession."

It was a "concession" altogether inadequate to the situation, as indicated in the last paragraph of Enid Stacy's letter.

TROUBLE AT THE DOCKS.

During this month of November trouble developed at the local Docks. Some men were brought from Cardiff (by what the local merchants claimed to be an outside firm) to unload a cargo of deals at less than the Bristol rates, and the Deal Runners of the Port struck work. The Bristol Timber Importers' Association thereupon informed the strikers that work could only be resumed on new terms and conditions (piece rates, etc.). The workers demurred, and Tom McCarthy came from London to aid the local union officials, Gorman and Baker, in resisting their impost. Mr. Gilmore Barnett described the timber merchants' proposals as such that the men must not, nay, dare not, accept, and said the lock-out was not so much to vindicate the principle of piece work as it was to smash unionism.

By means of demonstrations and mass public meetings, the men made their case known to the public, and received much sympathy from the working population, but few could have realised what a protracted struggle had commenced.

"GRAMMY" HUNTER.

Months passed ere the struggles ended, and often the deal-runners and confectionery workers operated together.

At the docks, Mr. Græme Hunter (a "strike-breaker," whom the crowd nicknamed "Grammy") introduced "free labourers." The press of November 28th said of these "... The men ... are housed in a large room at ... offices. Bedding is provided ... large stoves have been brought into the building for heating and cooking purposes, and a cook has been engaged. An ample store of provisions has been accumulated, and the men appear to be very comfortable, while their conduct is spoken of as excellent. During yesterday, the Rev. Pitt Eykyn, of St. Augustine's, conducted a service in which the men joined heartily. ... " and for others

OTHER SERVICES.

Six weeks earlier the "sweet" girls, headed by the Loyal St. George Brass Band, had paraded to Highbury Chapel, where Mr. Sanders worshipped. They were accommodated with seats, but, states the strike committee's records, the minister (Rev. H. Arnold Thomas) made scarcely any direct allusion to the strike. At the service a fortnight later, however, he is reported as saying, "... certain grave charges affecting the character of a member of this congregation having been thrust upon the attention of all. I feel it my duty to make a brief statement. I have myself given many hours to the investigation, and I believe I have heard almost everything there is to be said on either side. The result is that I have been led to the conclusion ... that the charges which have been publicly brought against Mr. Sanders are shamefully unjust. He added that the Strike Committee had informed him of their resolve to come there every Sunday until the dispute was settled. He deeply regretted this decision because, in his opinion, it showed a great want of consideration for the rights and feelings of persons with whom they (the strike committee) had no sort of quarrel. ... "

TRADES COUNCIL JOIN IN.

The Trades Council also investigated the matter, but they came to

quite an opposite conclusion. In their opinion, so righteous was the girls' case, that they decided to establish a precedent on their behalf by participating in a Sunday parade for the first time in their history, and on the following Sunday (November 6th) about fifty of its delegates, including the president (Albert Vincent), the secretary (John Curle), and treasurer (T. Dancey), headed the procession. Having assembled at Morley Statue (Bristol Bridge) they moved off, accompanied by two bands and carrying several flags and banners. One of these bore the motto, "God Save the People," another contained a scriptural quotation, and a third was inscribed "Where Justice Prevails, Charity is not Required."

A press account says that on arrival at the chapel they were told they would not be let in "unless in batches of five or six, and they would be distributed in different parts of the chapel." It was therefore decided to go on to Lovers' Walk, where they held a meeting, and Albert Vincent, presiding, said, "They had been refused admittance into Highbury Chapel, and they were



JOHN CURLE

Bristol's first Labour Magistrate (1894). Entered City Council (St. Paul's Ward, 1896), Lord Mayor (1928). (Died 1928).

there to protest against it. It had been said to them that they might enter as worshippers, but he himself did not know that they wanted to go in any other capacity, or that any person had a right to assume so. (Hear, hear.) It was true that some of them were also curious to know what kind of doctrine was taught there—(hear, hear)—a curiosity excited by recent events. (Applause.) This was the first time the Trades Council had turned out on a Sunday, but they thought the case of the girls was so just that they had felt bound to support them in every way they could." (Applause.)

Mr. Curle (secretary of the Council) moved a resolution to the effect that that meeting of the Trades Council and workers in connection with the strike at Sanders and Sons, strongly condemns the action taken by the Rev. H. Arnold Thomas in the dispute, and in placing restrictions upon the right of Sanders' girls to go into Highbury Chapel. This was supported by Mr. T. Dancey and Mr. E. J. Watson, and carried unanimously.

The procession then re-formed and marched back by the chapel, *en route* to the Horsefair, where Mr. Harold Brabham added a few words.

Two weeks later a large contingent of the dockers now affected by the lock-out in the timber trade, joined the girls in another demonstration to the same place of worship. This time they found the main gates closed and several constables stationed on the pavement, so it was decided to proceed to the Horsefair, and a meeting there adopted

A STRONGLY-WORDED RESOLUTION

in reference to occurrences of a few days previously in the Bristol Court during the hearing of a charge brought against a constable by two of the girls on strike. According to a press report, the solicitor for the defence, when addressing the magistrates, referred to W. R. Oxley in terms that caused H. H. Gore, who appeared for the girls, to raise an objection, but it was one the bench did not uphold. Stormy scenes followed, and continuing his statement the solicitor "... maintained that Oxley was a professional agitator; by his personal appearance it could be seen he was not one of those people who earned his living

by the sweat of his brow like an ordinary docker or workman, but went walking about the streets getting the money of these little girls, and ...". At this point Gore again rose in protest, but, "I think if you would calmly sit down you would act differently," he was told by the magistrates' clerk, who then referred to the solicitor's remarks and said he "is perfectly regular in commenting upon this case in the way he has done. Maybe he will call witnesses to prove his statements."

Gore persisted in his objection, but was told to sit down, and the hearing proceeded, but a little further, he angrily collected his books and papers and left the court with his clients and witnesses. The case against the constable was thereupon dismissed, but the next day's press report caused much to be said and written between then and the end of the year.

OTHER OPINIONS.

The following day a letter appeared from the Rev. G. E. Ford, of Holy Trinity Church. He wrote:

"... It is not for me to make any comment on the merits of the case ... but I beg leave to make a statement. ... I desire to say that I have had abundant opportunity of forming a just opinion of Mr. Oxley's character and conduct in general, and especially in the matter of his connection with Sander's strike. ... Mr. Oxley has never received a single penny directly or indirectly as remuneration for what he has done on behalf of the girls on strike, either as a member of the Strike Committee or otherwise. On the contrary he has freely given his money on behalf of these girls. ... I have examined the books of the Strike Committee. I have felt bound to make this statement, because it appears to me a grievous and lamentable thing that in a Court of Justice, of all places, an honest, worthy, and generous man should have had such groundless and hurtful imputations cast upon him."

The Rev. T. W. Harvey, of St. Agnes', backed this up by a letter saying: "... from my personal knowledge of him (Oxley) extending over some six years, I can testify that ... he is recognised by all who know him as one of the most upright, in-

dustrious, and unselfish of men. He is not the Secretary or the Agent of a trades union, although the Secretary of a trades union may surely be as honourable a man as a clergyman, or a solicitor, and may have earned his pay as justly. The offence of Mr. Oxley is that he is one of a band of men and women who have devoted all their spare time for many weeks, without reward and without hope or prospect of reward, to the cause of the poor girls on strike."

Mr. Lewis A. Salmon also wrote "... I have known Mr. Oxley for fourteen years ... I first made his acquaintance at one of the principal Non-Conformist Chapels in the city. ... He became a teacher in the Sunday School ... where he has remained for about eleven years. ... As a Conservative, of course, I have very little sympathy with his political views ... impracticable, and in my opinion, pernicious. But for his disinterestedness, his integrity, the readiness with which, at all cost to himself, he is ever willing to help those who are in trouble ... I have the profoundest respect, and am proud, considering it an honour to reckon such a man among my warmest friends."

AND PROTESTS.

Largely attended public protest meetings considered the Watch Committee, who had engaged the solicitor, should be held responsible, and appointed a deputation to wait upon that Committee. A radical member of it, Dr. Cunningham, who sat for N. St. Philip's, moved that the deputation be heard, but by eight to four the previous question was carried. The doctor then moved that the Committee ask the solicitor to withdraw the statement complained of, which another radical (Mr. Herbert Ashman, of St. Paul's) seconded, and five voted for this, but seven against.

The matter was also raised in the City Council, and there likewise was the previous question carried (26-18). Alderman Inskip, in moving this, said, "Mr. Oxley had been vindicated by the clergymen's letters," but the Strike Committee was very aggressive and would not let it stay at that. By handbills, etc., they told workers, a leader in the Labour Movement had been "grossly slandered," and called upon them to assemble in the Haymarket and

"take the matter in hand."

At this meeting another resolution was adopted and forwarded to the Watch Committee, which some considered was "contemptuously treated," so it was decided to send a further deputation to them. Albert Vincent, speaking at a later Haymarket meeting, reported that this one was "courteously received." He added, the Mayor told them their previous letter had not been treated with contempt, and further that they had no control over the matter.

"SO FAR, SO GOOD"

summarised the first portion of another resolution that that Haymarket meeting thereupon passed, but, it concluded, "it deems the result of the interview with the deputation as otherwise unsatisfactory, inasmuch as by paying the solicitor's fee after the circumstances had been made known to the committee, they, being indifferent and inactive as regards complaints made to them, had passively supported the charge in a manner this meeting considered unworthy of a representative body."

CONCLUSIONS.

Behind the scenes correspondence was passing between Oxley and the solicitor, at the conclusion of which copies were sent to the Press and published. In the course of it the solicitor said, "the word 'paid' agitator was withdrawn when it was represented that you received no salary for your services." He also stated that he was "in the midst of saying that you went about getting or collecting the monies received by the little girls who were out on strike for the purpose of putting it into the coffers of the union which kept alive a miserable state of affairs, when your solicitor interrupted me in the middle of the sentence, and you now endeavour to put a construction upon the half-finished sentence which you know it was never intended to bear; and you have fostered a misapprehension on the part of others, thereby causing scandal, libel, and abuse to be freely circulated for no cause whatever. . . I could have no motive in saying anything against you, but it is the duty of every advocate to criticise adversely the testimony of any witness who puts himself forward to support a case which that advocate has reason to believe, from his in-

structions, and the evidence at his disposal, is unfounded; this I did and always shall do—if I had failed to take this course I should have failed in my duty. . . .”

In a recent letter Oxley concluded by saying he was now enabled “. . . to safely leave the matter. . . .” And in reading of these episodes now (as of all the others mentioned in this account of the local Labour and Socialist Movement) readers will understand that they are not to be taken as in any way reflecting on the character of any of the individuals or bodies referred to. Each played their part in their day and generation, and the ability, honour and integrity of them all is unquestioned.

MEANWHILE

the public were not allowed to lose sight of the fact of the strike and lock-out.

As the weeks passed the demonstrations increased in size. At most of them banners and placards were displayed, some of which made references to topical events, whilst others were inscribed with texts—biblical and otherwise. The deal runners revealed a tragic sense of humour by carrying poles exhibiting “A Docker’s Dinner”—a diminutive

loaf and a polony, or a “two eyed steak” (kipper). Local stalwarts supported by Tom McCarthy, and now and again by Ben Tillett, made rousing speeches at meetings in the Haymarket and at the Grove.

It was at one of these that Jim O’Grady made his first public speech for the movement. A broth of an Irishman, Jim was desperately in earnest, and in the course of the next month or two developed into a full-fledged Socialist. Speaking anywhere and everywhere, in season and out of season at the Socialist Society’s meetings, he was also active in the Trade Union world. Of an irrepressible nature, he was bound to be a leader in any work with which he became associated.

Soon he was occupying the presidential chair of the Trades Council, and was president of the Second Trade Union Congress, in Bristol (at the Colston Hall, September, 1898). His was the first T.U. Congress Presidential Address that promulgated Socialism as the objective of Trades Unionism. He contested the District Ward for a Council seat in 1896, polling 423 votes “for O’Grady and the common good,” against 1,242 for John Bastow (Liberal). In the following year he entered the Council as the first Labour representative for the newly constituted Easton Ward. In 1906 he was elected M.P. for Leeds, a seat that he held until 1924, when he was appointed Governor-General of Tasmania, and had the dignity of Knighthood conferred upon him.

THE SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS!

With the approach of Christmas, a desire was expressed to provide those locked out and on strike with a bit of seasonable fare. To this end the dockers and confectionery workers arranged a joint demonstration, for Friday, December 23rd, two days before Christmas Day, which fell on the Sunday.

Placards were issued, headed “The March of the Workers,” announcing a big Lantern Parade of the locked-out deal runners, Sanders’ white slaves, and the general organised trades, through the city from the Grove to a monster meeting in the Horsefair. Said the notices:

“The Christmas bells are ringing,
the sky is clear and bright,
Your masters pray for peace, but
are compelling you to fight.



JAS. O'GRADY

(Bristol Socialist; joined Movement during Dockers' struggle, 1892. Now Sir Jas. O'Grady—Governor-General of Tasmania, 1924-30, and now appointed Governor of the Falkland Islands).

Away with Politics!
Labour to the front!"

This innocent and well-meaning endeavour to raise a few extra shillings whereby a little of the spirit of Christmas might reach the workers directly engaged in the prevailing conflict with their employers, resulted in one of the worst instances of local official blundering and terrorism within living memory.—Black Friday.

The thought of thousands of hungry strikers with their supporters parading through the city with "torches" on such a night, filled the authorities with alarm. The police objected to "torches," and correspondence passed between the committees and the chief constable on the matter. This ended in a deputation, consisting of Gorman, Weare, R. Sharland, Brabham, and McCarthy, waiting upon him. They reported that "the chief" was very considerate and sociable. McCarthy told him they were not seeking trouble, and jovially added that he wanted to go home to his family for Christmas; and when they explained that ordinary Chinese lanterns on poles was all they contemplated carrying, and that their only intention was for a peaceful, orderly demonstration, the police chief appeared quite satisfied, and they left with the impression that all was well. This was on the Thursday, the eve of the demonstration.

HUSSARS AND GUARDS.

Unknown to the deputation, however, other arrangements were in hand. The city authorities "deemed it prudent to be prepared for emergencies," and a squadron each of the 20th Hussars and the 4th Dragoon Guards came to the city during the evening by special train from Farnborough. About 200 in all, of whom about a third proceeded to Horfield Barracks, the remainder being quartered in the city.

The two committees held separate meetings during the evening for their different business, and whilst that of the Sanders' Strikers was in session, a constable brought them a quite unexpected note. It was a copy of printed "regulations" that were then being posted on the walls and communicated to the press. They appeared next day, and set out that "The Chief Constable (Mr. Coathupe) having received a notification that a

procession will march from the Grove to the Horsefair, officers regulating traffic in the streets are ordered to facilitate the progress of the persons forming the procession through the following thoroughfares: The Grove, Prince Street, Thunderbolt Street, Broad Quay, in front of the Tontine Warehouses, to the Stone Bridge, Rupert Street, terminating in the Horsefair. Officers on patrol duty will accompany the procession, and those on street duty are to prevent the procession from interfering with the ordinary traffic of any other streets. The Chief Constable has intimated to the promoters of the proposed procession that torches and lanterns of any description will not be allowed to be carried. Constables are therefore directed to remonstrate with any person attempting to carry any torch, Chinese lantern, or any article of the same dangerous nature, and, if necessary, to apprehend any contumacious person defying the law by apprehending him or her pursuant to the Local Encroachment Act."

Soon after its receipt Tom McCarthy, Gorman and Brimble came from the deal-runners, saying that their committee had received a copy of the notice, that they were not going to submit to this police dictation, but that they had decided to take an independent course, and had sent a reply to the Chief Constable as follows:

"Dear Sir,—We received your message which prohibits our carrying lights in to-morrow's procession, and which also directs our line of route; and after consultation with my colleagues I beg to inform you that we shall comply with the first part of your instructions in carrying no lights. We are sincerely desirous of preserving the peace of the city, but could not consent to have our line of route marked out first, and with all due respect will only give way when a stronger force than our own is pitted against us, and then only with strong protest.

Sincerely and respectfully yours,
TOM MCCARTHY."

In these circumstances the committee now decided to withdraw the girls from the procession.

BLACK FRIDAY.

Next day, Friday, was the day of the demonstration, and the appearance of the police notices,

McCarthy's letter, and the presence of the military in addition to drafts of police from other towns, gave rise to much comment. The public had not expected such a development, and it became the one topic of conversation. As the day wore on and it became known that the strike committee and the authorities were no longer on speaking terms, that no further communication passed between them as apparently each had said their last word, all sorts of wild rumours and speculations as to what might happen were rife. The mass of the people sympathised with the committee's desire to parade the city and collect what they could for distribution amongst those dependent on their funds.

Generally, they agreed that many of those more fortunate citizens who would be shopping that evening would be moved by the spirit of Christmas to give a little of their relative plenty. It all seemed so reasonable that despite the presence of the military, etc., the feeling prevailed that commonsense would rule and all end well. They demonstrated this belief by flocking into the city in enormous numbers. Had they anticipated any of the later happenings of the evening it is certain they would not have come out in the peaceful, trusting way that they did. But their faith was misplaced, and for years after the day was remembered as Black Friday.

All that actually occurred that night probably no one person knows, but many records of the time are available.

Towards evening, says one Press account, "the 4th Dragoon Guards with their lances in rest and pennons flying galloped down from Horsfield Barracks to the Central Station Yard in Silver Street in readiness for any call on the part of the police"; and in Baldwin Street was another centre where military were quartered.

AT THE GROVE.

Shortly after 6 o'clock, intending participants in the parade began to assemble in the vicinity of the Grove, and presently the appointed marshals put in an appearance; but the demonstration committee made no pronouncement as to any intention.

Numbers of police were in attendance, some mounted and others in

compact bodies, "whilst detectives and plain clothes officers mingled among the crowd." A body of Hussars wearing great coats "and apparently prepared for a night's work," passed through Prince St., on their way to Cumberland Road, where the "free labourers" were lodged. The gathering multitudes were extremely good tempered, and whilst waiting for the march to begin entertained themselves with harmless "boos" and cheers, interrupted with the singing of some of the now popular parody songs, especially "Glory, Glory, Hallelujah, Glory, Glory, Hallelujah, We'll hang Grammy Hunter on a sour apple tree, as we go marching on."

There was a lot of delay in starting the procession, but just before eight o'clock it moved off, headed by a band playing marching music, and shepherded by a strong body of police (some of whom were on horseback), along the route laid down by the chief constable. Extra police had been stationed at various points, and at the Clare Street end of the Drawbridge the mounted officers also temporarily halted in case any attempt was made to break through at this point to the centre of the city, but the marchers passed straight along and duly arrived at the Horsefair without untoward incident.

ELSEWHERE

it was otherwise. As the main body left the Grove a fairly big section led by McCarthy and some members of the committee, turned in an opposite direction—through Queen Square and Queen Charlotte Street and across Bristol Bridge. Whilst this section was going down Redcliff Street, a company of military rode down Victoria Street and along by the New Cut, apparently fearing that the "blacklegs'" quarters was the processionists' objective, but the marchers turned down Redcliff Street, through Portwall Lane to Temple Street, then Old Market, Milk Street, Barrs Street, and the Barton to the Horsefair, and thus "chose their own route." It was a very modest choice, however, for the centre of the city was studiously avoided.

BRISTOL BRIDGE.

A third section of the demonstrators who thought fit to choose a city

route met with stout resistance. This occurred at the bottom of Bridge Street. Dense crowds were assembled there, and a strong body of constables, including several Gloucestershire men, under charge of Superintendents, were drawn up in a diagonal line from the St. Nicholas corner of High Street to the far corner of Bridge Street. According to a press account, a few minutes before eight o'clock, a great moving crowd appeared on the Welsh Back, making towards the Bridge, apparently with the object of getting through into Wine Street or High Street. A rush was made on approaching the line of police, and a rough and tumble scrimmage ensued. By dint of pressure from behind, the front portion of the crowd, to the number of two or three hundred, broke through the rank. Several constables were knocked down, and Supt. Cann . . . found himself rolling on the ground with about a dozen of the attacking party. The line, however, was soon closed up, and the remainder of the crowd fell back. The policemen used their batons without hesitation upon those who broke the rank, and some heads were belaboured with lusty blows, but fortunately without serious injuries. The men thus dealt with wasted no time in disputing the conduct of the police, but ran as fast as their feet could carry them along Bridge Street, a large portion of the bystanders being absorbed in the general rush. But the size of the Bridge Street crowd was appreciably diminished only for a moment, and the masses of people closed in again all round the spot occupied by the police. Shortly after eight the body of dragoons left the bridge and passed along Bridge Street and down Union Street to the Horsefair, hooted meanwhile by many of the onlookers, the majority of whom followed in their wake.

THE HORSEFAIR.

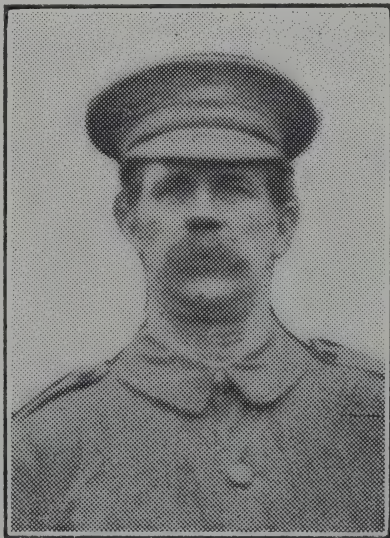
For some time it was in doubt where the speaking, if any, would take place, but this question was soon solved by a couple of wagons being drawn into the area, and placed in position—one at the North end, for the Sander's Strike Committee, and the other at the Southern for the dockers' leaders. A single lantern was hung on one of the upturned shafts of each wagon,

and was a beacon light round which the populace gathered. Whilst the people were assembling, girls went round collecting contributions towards the special Christmas Fund. A band which took up its position near the Strike Committee's wagon, played "Rule Britannia," and the crowd, which had now assumed great proportions, joined lustily in the chorus, "Britons never shall be slaves."

Some members of the Committee arrived, reported the position of affairs, and stated that the police had been out-manœuvred. About eight o'clock there was a great influx of people into the Horsefair, and it was estimated that at least 20,000 persons were present.

At the confectionery workers' platform Harold Brabham presided, supported by the general organiser of the Gas Workers' Union—Pete Curran—Gore, Watson, Weare, Sharland, Petherick, and others.

All strongly protested against the importation of the military to the city, and urged the people not to be provoked into breaking the peace.



HAROLD BRABHAM
(Foremost of "new" Unionists.
First Labour Candidate. Redcliff
Ward, 1893.

The photograph was taken during the Great War, and the uniform has no association with Black Friday!

Said Brabham, they "would carry the movement of that night to a legitimate and successful issue by wresting the power of the Council from the hands of the people who now had it and to put themselves in possession of it. This could be done very quietly and very peaceably by returning Labour candidates and working for Labour and Labour politics." (Cheers.)

Paul Stacy, Gilmore Barnett, H. Pointing, and Tom McCarthy spoke from the Dockers' platform, where Albert Vincent was chairman, supported by John Curle (Secretary, T.C.), T. J. Dancy, and others.

Addressing the crowd, McCarthy said he could almost cry with delight at the way they had behaved themselves, because they had done just what he wanted them to do. (Cheers.)

PEOPLE PROMISE PEACE.

They had demonstrated to washerwomen Town Councillors and applewomen Magistrates, and to jackass Watch Committees, they they were men; and the first thing he wanted them to do was to repeat after him a promise in the direction of peace and good order. (Hear, hear.)

The audience then repeated after him, "I promise as a man and a trades unionist—and a non-unionist—to go home after this meeting quietly and orderly." (Cheers.) Let them stick to that promise and all would be right. They had begun their fight with the Watch Committee, and they would "clinch" it next November, when they turned them out. (Cheers.) That night they had been placed on the verge of madness; Bristol had been a human volcano, and it wanted but a spark to kindle a flame. This would have meant riot and bloodshed, for which they would not have been responsible. (Cheers.) From the bottom of his heart he said, "Thank God we have been quiet." (Cheers.) Their common sense had spoilt the foolery of those who now controlled and mismanaged Bristol city. (Cheers.) They had on the magisterial bench and on the Watch Committee men who at election times bitterly opposed one another as political partisans, but who, after the election, closed their ranks to fight Labour. Liberal fool and Tory rogue had combined together to place Bristol on the verge of destruc-

tion. They must "down with Tory and down with Liberal," and have Labour only and "bread and butter" politics. (Cheers.)

PROVOCATIVE ACTS.

"During the progress of the meetings," (a next day's newspaper is again quoted) "bodies of police. . . were concentrated at the Horsefair, where their presence excited hostile feeling amongst some portions of the crowd, and those immediately round the dockers' platform hooted vigorously. A little later, when a body of the Dragoons passed through Lower Union Street to the police station, there was renewed hooting, although cheers were also raised at the call of one of the speakers. Matters became quieter until almost the close of the meeting, when there was some hustling, which continued at intervals for some time. About this time Charles Jarman was arrested for alleged inciting to riot—an offence alleged to have been committed during the scuffle at Bristol Bridge. Considerable excitement was occasioned, and in the subsequent disturbance the police charged the more aggressive of the crowd.

"Just before 9.30 things had assumed such an aspect that it was decided to call out some of the Dragoons, who formed up outside Silver Street and proceeded to a spot in the thoroughfare between the weighing machine and the fountain, then wheeled round and cleared the square. A second detachment followed and helped in pursuing the crowd round the Horsefair and through the streets in the vicinity."

A respectable solicitor was seen sprinting along Milk Street, and the defenceless people generally fled in all directions. Many climbed the railings into St. James' Churchyard to keep out of the way of the soldiers, but were followed by police who drove them out again!

Describing it the Press reporter wrote, "The chase, which was kept up for some time, was not without its attractiveness, and spectators who had found safe quarters seemed to enjoy it immensely. It was stated that a number of stones were thrown at the military. Colonel Salis-Schuabe narrowly escaped being hit on the head, some missile taking off his hat; and two of the Dragoons afterwards complained of being hurt,

but in the case of one it was subsequently explained that he had been unhorsed on the rough roadway. After the retirement of the military the streets were gradually deserted, and the city became so quiet after eleven o'clock that the troops returned to Horfield at midnight."

MANY INJURED.

The same report gave the names of six persons who were treated at the Infirmary for cuts on the head received from baton blows by the police, but many more were injured. The Strike Committee published 500 posters asking all such to communicate with them, and 57 cases of injuries to civilians were thus verified. Many of these claimed to be persons returning home from work or engaged in Christmas shopping, and in no way connected with the demonstrators, and included a Clifton schoolmaster. Additional to this it was later stated that there were reports of personal injuries from 51 members of the police force.

Ill-informed persons often refer to Bristolians as sleepy, forgetting that, proverbially, they sleep with one eye open, and that the city's history abounds with instances of its citizens defending their rights and fighting for greater freedom.

At the time of Black Friday it contained a virile radical movement for democracy—as they understood it—political and religious liberty. But the principle of democracy also implies the economic liberty; that can only be assured by a state of Socialism, a co-operative commonwealth, or social democracy, although as yet only the Socialists understood. It was an issue, however, that was bound to force itself, and as it became clear the political parties everywhere were necessarily remodelled on the new basis. Anti-Socialists who place the claims of private individuals and private enterprise for personal gain before corporate good, and who masquerade under the name of "citizen" on the one hand, and on the other the *real* citizens, those who judge everything by the standard of individual happiness and prosperity in the common good.

Socialism is true citizenship. Bristol was one of the first places to witness the new demarcation.

RADICAL OPINION.

It was true of '92, however, that a Radical section of the Liberals were keen champions of the political rights of the people, and these took a very serious view of the situation, and a meeting of members of the Liberal Reform Club, Brunswick Square, which was held that same evening, passed a resolution that appeared in the press next morning, strongly condemning "the dastardly conduct of the authorities for instructing the military and police to charge the peaceful and orderly meeting of citizens held in the Horsefair this evening."

Many other bodies passed similar resolutions. The radical paper, *The Mercury* (incidentally this journal originated the designation Black Friday) said its word:

"... the good humour and law-abiding temper of a Bristol crowd were put to a very severe test last night, and, we rejoice to say, came successfully through the ordeal. . . There seems to have been plenty of Justices in readiness with the Riot Act burning in their pockets and feeling themselves major-generals at the very least. . . We feel profoundly indignant at the slur which has been passed upon the good name of Bristol by the panic-stricken and needless appeal to military force."

A PUBLIC ENQUIRY.

The need for a public enquiry was pressed in many quarters, and ten days later Gore moved, in the City Council, that the Home Secretary be requested to make a full enquiry into all the events and circumstances. He made some very strong accusations against the magistrates and military. The accuracy of these was denied by the Mayor (Mr. W. R. Barker) and it brought from Gore the cutting retort that "the fact of the statements being disputed was an extra ground for having an enquiry."

John Swaish, in seconding the resolution, said he had not been identified with those movements (the demonstrations, etc.), so could speak impartially. He had seen the lanterns it was proposed to carry. . He had one in his pocket at the present time. It was a little toy worth something less than a half-penny, and if carried in the street the first puff of wind would have blown it out. Yet that miserable little light was sufficient to terrify

the magistrates and to bring the military from Aldershot. . . Without referring to matters in legal process, or to some portion of the demonstrators, he made bold to say that within his recollection there never was a more orderly throng of people in the streets of Bristol than on the 23rd December. The people were in the best of humour. . . He questioned whether the military were acting legally in doing police duty seeing that the Riot Act was not read. It was said they did not charge, but he saw them on the pavement chasing the people as a wild dog might be chased. He saw a troop of soldiers at the end of Wine Street with a magistrate at the head of them. It was, no doubt, a very imposing scene, though the magistrate ought to have been in some kind of uniform (laughter), but apart from that it was to him a melancholy reflection that there were a large number of people in Bristol who felt uneasy that their immediate safety should be in the hands of gentlemen who had shown so much error under so little provocation."

A heated discussion followed, but in division only twelve voted for Gore's resolution, the dozen being Messrs. Lloyd, Latham, Howell Davies, Parsons, Gilmore Barnett, Dr. Cunningham, Bastow, Herbert Ashman, J. Swaish, W. H. Elkins, H. W. Twiggs, and Gore; 43 voted against.

DEFIANCE AND DERISION.

The Socialists and Trade Unionists interpreted the authority's actions as an attempt to stem the rapidly growing new working class movement. They openly accepted them as a challenge, took it up, and boldly faced the issue in a spirit of defiance and derision, the like of which had not been witnessed in the city for many a long day—nor has it been since.

One of the first indications appeared in lines at the foot of bills announcing a big demonstration of dockers, headed by Trades Council delegates, at the Grove, on the New Year's day:

"Hush! Hush! Hush! the Labour
Bogie Man,
Has got his PAPER LANTERN
to fright you if he can;
But, take great care, last time the
Fogies ran

And called the Troops and Police-
men to squelch the Bogie Man!

NO MORE POLITICS.

LABOUR REPRESENTATION.

In the procession some of the bannerettes bore allusions to the scrimmage at Bristol Bridge in scornful and anything but polite usage of the name of Supt. Cann, thus:

"Who cracks heads?—Cann."

And another:

"Cann may lead bobbies to crack
heads

And bully folk and rant,
But soon the people's turn will
come,

And then he'll find he can't."

Whilst a third read:

"Cann carries a bludgeon all the
week,

And leaves it home on Sundays;
The Bible he flourishes then
instead,

And can't is his name until
Monday."

The references were, of course, not intended as personal, and were mild in comparison with a leaflet of five verses printed and broadcast under the heading:

TO THE WATCH COMMITTEE.

A WARNING!

Space does not allow of more than two verses being quoted—the first and fourth:

"Think ye that the people will
tamely submit

To the sneers of your Bantams
and Beaks?

Such rabble they'll hurl to the
bottomless pit,

With the ogre of Law and his
sneaks.

And your Bullies, yclept the Pro-
tectors of Peace,

The infernal assembly shall
swell,

And Justice dispensed by your
lackies shall cease,

'Tis a Justice begotten of Hell.

Each blow that your Bullies at
Labour shall aim

Will an hundred times ten be
returned.

'Tis not mankind alone that ye
baton and maim,

But Freedom is flouted and
spurned.

Beware! aye, beware, how ye
anger the Just,

With your Scorn and Corruption,
and Pride—

Ye travesty Justice, ye sully your
trust;
Do ye dare to dam Liberty's
tide?

A DEFIANT SPIRIT

found further expression in another song which was set to music, printed and distributed in thousands, and sung at meetings. It defies curtailment, so with deletion of some names, it follows, without comment.

BLACK FRIDAY.

Not long ago some people said
"We'll march in grand array
Through Bristol's city one fine night
With bands and banners gay;
Some Chinese lanterns too we'll tie
Upon our walking sticks,
And beat as thro' the streets we hie
The gas supplied by Dix."*

But Coathupe stuck a bill up saying
"Oh! oh! oh!
My orders are to never let you
Go, go, go
Through Bristol's streets by night,
With your lanterns all alight,
And if you try my bobbies will cry,
Woh! Woh! Woh!"

But Labour winked its eye and said,
"The Chief but plays catspaw
To those who each day sit in Court
A'belching forth the law."
W——, W——, T——, B——, L——,
And such like beaks as these,
Have sought to trap the working
man,
And bring him to his knees.

But they shan't stop the march we
have
In view, view, view,
With shoulder pressed to shoulder
staunch
And true, true, true;
We'll march to the Horsefair, and
hold
Our meeting there,
And show the world that we can
dare
And do, do, do.

On Bristol Bridge we looked so
grand,
That Cann with fright fell down,
Across his manly chest we strode,
And marched up through the
town;
Into the Horsefair thousands
poured,
With bands and flags galore,
And listened to the speeches made
By Brabham and by Gore.

But C—— W—— rode up and said,
"By George, George, George,
This crowd like me is very fine
And large, large, large;
A riot I must make, for the law these
men won't break,
So never mind the blessed Act,
But charge! charge! charge!
Along the streets the soldiers rode,
Dispensing sabre cuts,
The bobbies drew their truncheons
out
And bashed in people's nuts;
And when perchance they happ'd
to meet
A fellow all alone,
They knocked him down, then ran
him in,
To save him walking home.
And twenty bob or fourteen days, he
Got, got, got,
The beaks had sworn that they
would make it
Hot, hot, hot;
For rows they can't abide, excepting
on their side,
And justice for the working man
is rot, rot, rot.

(*Chairman of the Gas Co., and
Alderman of the Council.)

AT THE COURTS.

Summonses were issued against several persons, and the Secretary of the Trades Council (John Curle) wrote to the papers saying that of these one only was upon a recognised trade union official, and that of the others one at most was connected with the Labour Movement. He must have referred to Charles Jarman (the secretary of the Sailors' and Firemen's Union) and Maximilian Delacroix. The latter was a Frenchman who had travelled from his native country to Dover to assist Major Edwards in a parliamentary contest there. The major, who later in life resided at Clifton and was well known in heterodox thinking circles, had strong Labour sympathies. He stood as an independent, and H. H. Gore acted as his election agent. Delacroix was self-invited, and his "support" lost more votes than it gained. The electors resented "foreign interference." The contest over, he accompanied Gore back to Bristol, and the stirring times were as wine to him. He was very excitable, but many who got to know him fell in love with his big-heartedness, and

several students at Clifton thanked him for lessons in the art of "parry and thrust." Like many of his compatriots he was an expert swordsman.

THE JUDGE.

Remanded from the police court, these two (with Jas. Baker) were tried at the Assizes before Sir J. C. Lawrance, Kt., and acting on advice pleaded guilty to "unlawful assembly on December 23rd." The case occupied two days, and at the close his Lordship summarised the events of Black Friday, and said that after going through the evidence carefully, it struck him that the authorities were well within their right in doing what they did, and had they not done so would have failed in their duty. . . He was going to pass upon the prisoners a very light sentence—a sentence lenient in his judgment, although they might not think so. Men must be taught that they could not gain their object . . . by force. . . That sort of thing never helped men yet, and he knew of no instance in which a cause had ever been gained by violence in this country. The sentence was that the three prisoners should be imprisoned for three months, and that they should enter into their recognisances in £50 each with two sureties of £25 each to be of good behaviour for six months.

AND JARMAN.

Jarman then asked the judge's permission to say a few words. The request being granted, he said he differed from the judge with regard to some of his observations. . . He was in that position through the prejudiced evidence against him. He was glad the judge wound up as he did. It would be a good lesson to himself . . . but he must admit—if the rope were round his neck and it was the last breath coming from his body—that if the military had not been brought into the city he and the two other men would not have been in that dock.

In what different ways is man's spirit shown. This of Jarman's was the same as he displayed in other totally different circumstances, *e.g.*, defying the anger of a gale and tempestuous seas in mid-Atlantic when he rescued seamen of another vessel and nationality from a watery grave and was decorated by a foreign

Government for doing it. This happened to him many times.

BEN TILLET SUMMONED.

The Sunday before Black Friday, Ben Tillett made a speech in the Horsefair which the local magistrates thought justified them in granting a summons against him for inciting to riot and unlawful assembly, although "Ca Ira," who seemed to be well informed, wrote in *Freedom* that the speech had been referred by the authorities to the Public Prosecutor who reported that he saw no ground for interfering. Tillett's immediate reply to the summons was to publish his speech in pamphlet form, "To the citizens of Bristol, in order that you may read my version of the speech . . . I feel convinced that the moral right is on my side, and I may safely leave to the judgments of right-thinking men the whole facts of the case."

ALLEGED INCITEMENT TO RIOT.

The gist of the speech, the "incitement to riot," was that he asked all those present to promise and repeat after him: "That we promise in defence of our home, wages, and interests, to use action, violent or pacific, to preserve our rights." He continued, ". . . the time might come (if they were not prepared for the persistent and intelligent use of the ballot box, when in very devilishness the power making them poor, intoxicated with its industrial triumphs would grind them down); that no other than a violent course would be left for them. . . Let them, whatever came, act together . . . Only by the use of economic knowledge and by the exercise of their privilege as voters could they secure either the instruments of production or the instruments or machinery of civil or imperial government."

The pamphlet was of eight pages, and the funds benefitted by thousands of copies being sold at a penny.

The summons was for Monday, January 9th, and Ben came to Bristol on the Saturday. He received a demonstrative welcome from a huge concourse of workers on arrival at Temple Meads. A carriage and four had been sent to accommodate him, and those who came with him, but the enthusiastic crowd removed the horses and drew the vehicle up Vic-

toria Street to Bristol Bridge, Baldwin Street and the Grove. Carrying banners and accompanied by bands, the demonstrators sung "Glory, Glory, Hallelujah," with all the vigour given to it in the old election rendering when the candidate not supported by the vocalists was metaphorically condemned to execution on a "sour apple tree"—"Grammy" Hunter to be the present "victim."

At the Grove a huge meeting was held, seven to eight thousand persons being a press estimate of the number present. Tillett was cheered again and again when he rose to speak. He said his heart was overflowing; and let them rest assured, come weal, come woe, were he to be hanged, drawn, and quartered, the movement would still be alive. Do not let them forget when their cheers had died out that there was a duty stern and relentless before them, a duty to organise, a duty to demand the full rights of the full life God had given them and nature intended, to demand for themselves, their wives, and their families more comforts, a higher competence, and make dear old Bristol a better, a brighter Bristol, and the workers of Bristol the controllers of Bristol's destiny. This heartening speech induced immense cheering and applause.

Wm. Whitefield, McCarthy, and others also spoke.

Next morning (Sunday) Sanders' girls and the dockers joined forces in another procession. In spite of drizzling rain five or six thousand joined the ranks and paraded through the city to the Grove where two monster meetings were held. Tillett again spoke, and was supported by Dr. Aveling, in addition to local speakers.

The proceedings commenced at Bridewell next day eventually meant a remand to the Assizes.

BRISTOL AROUSED.

Meantime the local movement persevered in its fighting policy, unperturbed and undeterred. A great procession and demonstration was organised for Saturday, February 9th. The whole of the 70 to 80 delegates to the Trades Council acted as marshals, and the place of honour was given to the dockers.

The procession, which was timed to leave the Ropewalk at 4.15, got

away promptly and took a long route—West Street, Stapleton Road, Seymour Road, Newfoundland Road, Union Street, Bridge Street, Baldwin Street, and the Quay, to the Grove. All the trade unionists affiliated to the Council, numbering about thirty thousand, had been urged to attend, and the leaders reported on the day that absentees were very few. The press, stating that the marchers were from eight to twelve abreast, and the procession about a mile-and-a-half long, agreed that "there was some justification for the estimate" of numbers participating.

Fifteen bands of music were in attendance, and of the wealth of banners displayed, thirty-five were of the large and more pretentious type (mostly gladly loaned by trade unions from other parts of the country).

Numerous nondescript emblems were carried, indicating the feelings of the processionists—particularly prominent were references to Sanders' White Slaves, specimens of the lanterns "which frightened the magistrates," and "a docker's banquet" (a pig's head and potatoes).

PEACE AND PROTEST.

The whole was a great success and made a deep impression in the city. Said the *Mercury*, "compared with that of December 23rd, it was of gigantic proportions, and we gladly place on record that all this vast crowd passed through the streets, up and down the city, demonstrating to their hearts' delight without injury to person or damage to property. . . the Chief Constable's instructions were that the police should afford every facility to the processionists, and this duty the force performed extremely well." Someone remarked "a lesson in what might have been and was not!"

When the Grove was reached it was getting dusk, and powerful petrol flares were used to illuminate the three platforms.

The Trades Council's President, Vice-President and Secretary (Albert Vincent, Chas. Goodliffe, and John Curle) were the respective chairmen, and great regret was expressed that Keir Hardie was unable to be present, but excellent speeches were delivered by J. H. Wilson, M.P., Will Thorne, McCarthy, Frank Sheppard, Whitefield, Brabham, and others; the culmination being the adoption,

amid much cheering, of a resolution emphatically protesting against the authorities' action on Black Friday; demanding to know (1) what proofs the magistrates had that we intended disturbing the peace, and (2) what was the justification for the attack which was made by them on peaceable citizens at the end of that meeting. It further called for a Government enquiry.

TRIED IN LONDON.

Tillett, who, by the way, was an Alderman of the London County Council, feeling circumstances rendered a fair trial impossible at Bristol, exercised the right of having it transferred to London.

The case now assumed national importance, and was taken by Mr. Justice Cave at the Central Criminal Court, on April 15th, 1893. Mr. Chas. Mathews and Mr. Douglas Metcalfe led for the prosecution, and Tillett, who pleaded not guilty, was defended by the Hon. B. Coleridge, Q.C., M.P., and Mr. Muir.

Mr. Mathews occupied ninety minutes in opening. Several passages of words then occurred between counsel over matters, and his Lordship soon showed that he intended to keep them to the point and a reasonable sense of proportion, and in doing so made several very trite remarks. One was as to the character of the crowd on December 23rd. Mr. Mathews saying, "Our contention will be that there was a riot that night," brought from Mr. Justice Cave

THE COMMENT,

"We may say it was an unlawful assembly, but I don't think that I should go to the length of calling it a riot." On Mr. Matthews insisting, "Well, that is what we say," he proceeded, "But here you have a crowd of 30,000 people put down by sixty Lancers. If that were a riot it would be remarkable, and if no riot was more difficult to deal with it would be a ridiculous performance. There have been worse things than that in Bristol!"

Later, Mr. Coleridge submitted that the speech of December 18th had no reference to December 23rd, and to Mr. Mathews' comment that "he did not think it could be questioned," His Lordship said he did not follow that, and . . . an argu-

ment on the point developed, Mr. Mathews saying that Tillett was talking about what is going to take place on the Friday, and then he asks the men to do something.

His Lordship, after reading the speech, then said, "That does not mean on that occasion," but Mr. Mathews was a keen prosecuting counsel, and persisted, "I submit that it does," whereupon the Judge retorted, "Oh, no, that won't do at all. It is very, very far-fetched indeed. I don't think the words can possibly have that construction, and I don't think anyone but a barrister would say so!"

BEN'S OWN IMPRESSIONS.

Over thirty years later, in the *Sunday Worker*, Ben wrote of his recollections of the trial. It is worth quoting from.

"... As I sat in the dock, the criminals of a century passed through my mind . . . this conception had such a fascination for me that I became insensible to Justice Cave's slow intonations. There was Barrister Mathews for the prosecution, perky as a Scotch terrier, barking and yapping and bent on my undoing . . . Coleridge for the defence mild, cultured and exacting, rebutted the learned counsel's outbursts. . . Three whole days were occupied in the solemn farce.

"One incident there was that had its humour. After describing me as . . . a possessor of all the criminal beatitudes, the screaming voice of Mathews reached its crescendo, suddenly awakening to his full senses the judge who had sat so patiently listening. Once awakened he said, 'Tut, tut, my learned friend. The prisoner is the most innocent looking man in court.'

NOT GUILTY.

"The jury took over an hour to consider the summing up, which was at least non-committal. The foreman, when called upon, sentimentally reported that I was not guilty of personally organising violence. He was then proceeding to express some sentiments derogatory to myself, when the judge abruptly announced 'prisoner discharged.' The clerk's sonorous 'Silence in court!' effectually stopped the foreman's speech. Thus ended an episode which helped considerably to build up the new Trade Union

Movement and to arouse an apathetic Trade Union leadership to a lively realisation of attacks on the liberty of many of those who were fighting for the bottom dog."

Paradoxically, great as was the interest taken in the case and satisfaction felt at its result in Bristol, there was a sense in which the personnel of the local movement was indifferent to it. To them

"THE FIGHT WAS THE THING."

From day to day, week to week, and month to month they were in it and of it. Fighting a bitter engagement in the class struggle with a firm faith that in the long run the stars in their courses were with them and a knowledge that at the moment the dice was loaded against them, "incidents," though important and serious enough to those engaged in them, were but by-the-way.



W. J. PETHERICK
(Active Socialist and Co-operator
from mid. eighties. Died 1927.)

The strike of Sanders' confectionery operatives was brought to a close after 26 weeks of struggle. In a final statement, signed by W. J. Petherick (who had acted as hon. secretary after Enid Stacy had left in January to take up work in the North) the committee said, "they . . . readily admit that the particular

object of the strike, viz: the right of combination in the factory, was not gained, they deem the general result as most satisfactory. Recognising that it was impossible to establish a Union, they conceived the idea of getting the whole of the girls into other and better situations and thus preventing any of them ever again becoming the tools of such a firm. They are glad to report that in this they have been successful, much to the general satisfaction and delight of the girls, nearly all of whom are earning much better wages. . .

"The vigorous way in which the strike was carried on was also the primary means of arousing the great attention in this part of the country to the Labour Question now so prominent; not the least successful result of which is the great increase of membership to the Trade Unions. Moreover, it was the means of raising the standard wages, with improved conditions to the workers now engaged in both this and other factories."

Accompanying this statement was a summary of accounts (audited by Albert Vincent and John Sharland, the president and treasurer of the Trades Council).

Over five hundred pounds had been subscribed from all parts of the country, in districts ranging from Scotland to Devonshire, and South Wales to the Humber. In its distribution W. R. Oxley voluntarily gave a great amount of time and labour. Many of the girls actually received, more as strike pay than their wages would have amounted to, so meagre was the pittance received from their late employers; and of those who helped in finding them new jobs Miss May, in particular, did yeoman service.

A B.L.W. FORERUNNER.

The Bristol Trades Unionist and Co-operators' Record, price 3d., was apparently the first Labour paper published in Bristol (excepting always the edition of *The Herald and Helpmate* that was published by Harrison Riley, from Phippen Street in 1875) and its second number (April, 1893) reported:

"The deal runners' lock-out is still being determinedly carried on. . . . The Sunday morning parade and meetings which have now been continued for about twenty weeks

are looked upon as a fixed institution in our city. It is a long and stubborn struggle . . . the principle of piece work has been conceded by the men . . . the timber merchants did not allow the other matters to be settled by the Conciliation Board . . . evidence is accumulating daily . . . that the real motive of the lock-out is to smash the Union. . . There is one feature about it that gives pleasure to record, that is the manifestation of closer union of skilled and unskilled workers.

In all industrial struggles the handicap of the workers is great. 'Empty stomachs, not only of themselves but of their wives and children,'—effects the workers alone feel—the employers never suffer this—and after 32 weeks of gallant resistance the deal runners returned to work on terms far short of what they had hoped for."

All the workers' struggles for justice are, however, victories—they lead the way to ultimate success, and those of the sweet girls and dock workers were no exception.

One of the immediate results was political. The pioneer socialist Wm. Baster, and the Dockers' Secretary "Bill" Gorman, were nominated that Spring for seats on the Bedminster Board of Guardians—West and East Wards respectively—and both gained seats. They were the first Labour representatives on the Board, to which they brought a new vision. The method of election then was different to now. Voting papers were distributed at the homes of the electors on Saturday, collected on Monday, the votes counted by Wednesday, and the result appeared in the press on the Thursday.

MINERS AND GUARDIANS.

At this time the Miners were engaged in one of their many struggles with the mine-owners. Well organised and in a strong union, their efforts were for a while overshadowed by the other and more spectacular fights. When these terminated the colliers were still out, and remained so for a long time. They received valuable help from those who had organised the campaigns of the "unskilled."

After a while the miners' official funds were exhausted, and many efforts were made to obtain financial aid from the public. This was given generously enough. Included was

the sale of many thousands of copies of the "Black Friday" Song. But the weekly distribution fell to as low as 5/- and less some weeks, which forced many to appeal to the Guardians for relief. The Board arranged for a certain amount of work in the stone yard (stone-breaking), and some Guardians urged that in allotting this, consideration should be given to the amount of the strike pay.

Baster stoutly objected to this, pointing out that all "official" funds were exhausted, and that "all the men got was from contributions of those who sympathised with them in their fight against the capitalists. Anyone might give help to a pauper. The money was only got by going from friend to friend and it was not really strike pay." The men were penalised, however, by a decision to give four days' relief work only instead of five.

Later on, as things became more desperate, Baster, Gorman, and others, led a march of several thousand to the workhouse at Flax Bourton (five miles each way on foot) to demand better treatment, or admission to "the house."

THE GREATEST GAIN.

Beyond question, however, the greatest gain from these hectic years was the number of earnest men and women who saw the light, and for the remainder of their life "ere the setting of the sun" devoted their energies to the service of the cause. To name each is impossible, but "named and nameless all live in us, one and all they lead us yet."

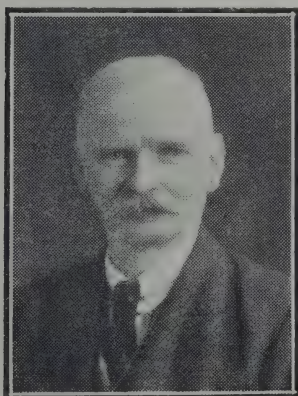
There was Tom Phillips (a working shoemaker who received training as a lay preacher, but abandoned any position he may have attained later on—probably a big one—and became one of the finest extempore speakers the local movement has ever possessed).

J. A. Cunningham (a bank clerk)—of exceptional ability and energy, and one of the earliest Labour members of the Bristol Board of Guardians, where he served for twenty years, first for St. Philip's, then St. Paul's. He was a member of the School Board and Education Committee. Always busy and eager to do his bit whether it was by voice or pen, or anyhow else. He was a great asset.



E. H. (Harry) JARVIS
(Died 1922).

Harry Jarvis (a carpenter)—hard-headed and unemotional, with a wide knowledge of Sociology and Marxian economics, that he was ever ready to impart to others. He became President of the Trades Council and the Socialist Society, and was chairman of the Social Democratic Party's very successful conference in the Shepherds' Hall, Bristol, 1909. A sound leader and counsellor.



W. C. FARE
(a founder of the Bedminster Group of Bristol Socialists in the nineties, now chairman of the Bristol South Labour Party).

Walter Fare, who fought several Municipal contests, and is to-day District Organiser of the N.U.D.A.W.

B. Harvey, a schoolmaster of Clifton, whose classic style of speech attracted many listeners. Often he was "top-hatted"—the professional head-gear of the day. On a Socialist platform this of itself excited curiosity, but many who stopped in wonderment, stayed to learn.

Tom Fisher, Fred Coneybear and Joe Sainsbury (this trio were early in the van and worked hard behind the scenes), Dan Davies, Chas. Martin, A. Musgrave, H. C. Bonner, W. H. Fox, R. Day, W. H. Roe, Fred Jennings, J. E. Martin, F. M. and A. Heffer, W. Reed, R. H. Jennings, W. Hillman, C. Jesson, and a host of others. The names of a few parsons should also be mentioned—the Revs. A. H. Easton, G. E. Ford, J. R. Graham (and his wife), and C. P. Wilson, but clerics in general lagged sadly behind—a striking tribute in support of the Marxian theory regarding "The Materialist Economic Conception of History."

The Socialists were ever urging upon the trade unionists the necessity of political action as a corollary to their industrial activities, and one of the most important advances of this time to note is a fuller appreciation and better understanding by the workers generally of the possibilities of political action and the building of an organisation for the purpose.

LEARNING THE LESSON.

The experiences of the strikes, and lock-outs, and Black Friday, and the general treatment received at the hands of their masters, drove home to the workers the lesson that more union in industrial action must be supplemented by similar political unity. Socialists and trade unionists, driven closer together, pooled opinions and founded the Bristol Trades Council Labour Electoral Association. One of the first acts of this body was in support of the candidatures of Baster and Gorman for the Bedminster Board of Guardians. From its inception the new body was a success and steadily grew in influence and power.

Its policy and programme was of necessity definitely socialistic, although it would be wrong to refer to it as a socialist organisation. In fact, many of its members neither

comprehended the meaning of Socialism nor subscribed to it as an objective, but they did realise that in times of stress—strikes, lock-outs, periods of unemployment and the like—the socialists were always champions of the workers' cause. This led to a fine spirit of comradeship prevailing between the L.E.A. and the Bristol Socialist Society, the latter still preserving its separate entity in furtherance of its work of educative propaganda.

THE GREAT WEAKNESS

of the Labour League and the Labour Emancipation League, which preceded the Labour Electoral Association was lack of financial support and particularly of lack of regular sources of income. This difficulty had been recognised by the Socialist Society, which body, as a matter of fact, had now inaugurated and earmarked a fund for the payment of election expenses and to elected representatives for loss of wages due to public service.

For this work, however, the new Association, backed by the Trades Council, was much better placed. It authoritatively appealed to all trade unions and Labour bodies to contribute regular sums in addition to enrolling individual subscribing members. Rules were agreed to providing for representation of subscribing bodies in fair ratio in its councils. It aimed at obtaining sufficient reliable income to enable it to pay "fellow workers" for loss of wages due to service on public bodies, eightpence per hour (the average trade union rate of pay at this time for "skilled" workers). Success attended its efforts, and the B.S.S. abandoned its separate efforts in this direction, became affiliated, and in actual practice its members played a big part and wielded a large influence in the Association's work.

EFFORTS AND GAINS.

The November Council Elections for that year (1893) saw four candidates of the new movement nominated; one, Wm. Baster, by the B.S.S. for Bedminster West, and three—all Socialists—by the L.E.A.—Frank Sheppard (who was the hon. sec. of the B.S.S.) for St. Paul's; John Sharland for St. Philip's North; and Harold Brabham for Redcliff. Programmes were very similar; there was a free exchange of speakers,

and very fine fights were put up.

The retiring member for St. Paul's (Herbert Ashman, a Liberal) did not seek re-election, and Frank Sheppard experienced a walk-over, Labour thus straightway regained the seat it had lost two-and-a-half years previously through the enforced resignation of Tovey. A good start!

An idea of the intensive work put into the contest is conveyed in the fact that John Sharland spoke at just upon ninety meetings (mostly open-air) in all parts of the city during the campaign. This so affected his voice that it dropped a whole tone, which was never recovered. Polling day brought its reward to all in excellent results:

*Redcliffe—

C. B. Hare, J.P. (Con).....	997
H. W. Twigg (Lib.)	837
Harold Brabham (Lab.).....	488

*Bedminster West—

W. A. Latham (Lib.)	1207
W. Baster (Soc.)	904
W. E. Gardner (Con.)	689

(*First time contested by Labour).

S. Philip's North—

J. Sharland (Lab.)	1227
Geo. Baker (Ind.)	561
(Labour gain).	



JOHN SHARLAND

(Pioneer. One of the original founders of the Bristol Socialist Society. City Councillor 1893-99. Died 1902).

This gain was most heartening. It will be remembered that Sharland was one of the original founders of the local Socialist Movement. His high ideals were accompanied by a very practical mind, and he made a great "hit" in the Council. So popular did he become that at the '96 election he was unopposed, but at the end of his second term, ill health compelled his retirement.

Just over two years later—in April, 1902—he died, at the early age of 49. At the graveside (Avonview Cemetery) Frank Sheppard and F. Gilman Barnett paid high tribute to his life and work. Later a stone was erected there to his memory by working class subscriptions, and unveiled by Geo. N. Barnes (then the general secretary of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers, of which Sharland was a member).

The City Council, on the motion of the Lord Mayor (Alderman C. E. L. Gardner) and Alderman C. B. Hare, unanimously requested the Town Clerk to send a letter of sympathy to the widow and family.

Uncompromising in advocacy and devotion to his working class ideals, Sharland won the love and respect of all he met. Very definitely he held that the working class would have to depend upon its own efforts for its emancipation from capitalism. In this work he regarded compromises or entanglements with others as exceedingly dangerous, to the extent that he deemed it his personal duty to decline all invitations to mansion house banquets, luncheons, dinners, etc., but he attended at the opening of Ham Green Hospital and N. St. Philip's Library, both these being works that he considered of benefit to the working class.

"Yet, while the serious thought his soul approved,
Cheerful he seemed, and gentleness he loved;
To bliss domestic he his heart resigned,
And with the firmest had the fondest mind."

IDEAL REPRESENTATIVES.

Sharland and Sheppard were wage-earners. Both had been schooled in experience of the hard lot of the workers, and, filled with a desire to do some good for their fellows, had educated themselves to a right understanding of social life. Thus armed, and blessed with minds as

practical as they were idealistic, they fearlessly faced the Council, and placed before it a new view-point. To cite two typical cases:

Nine years earlier (December, '84) a "report on enquiries into the condition of the Bristol Poor," had been published, with prefatory remarks by His Lordship the Bishop of the Diocese. Amongst other matters this contained revelations of terrible housing conditions. Sharland and Sheppard made this a live matter in the City Council. In doing so they exhibited photographs of the city slums, courts and alleys. So revolting were the conditions revealed that many Councillors could hardly believe them to be true. From that day to this Sheppard has conducted a great work for the better housing of the people, and though very much remains to be done, those who remember conditions of thirty or forty years ago will appreciate the great improvement.

Workmen's fares on tramcars was another matter they took up. In 1893—incredible as it now seems—there were no workmen's fares, moreover, at holiday times, fares were invariably raised, often doubled. By offering opposition to a Parliamentary Bill they secured the concession of the former and an abandonment of the latter.

TIMES CHANGING.

The early nineties found the work of the pioneer Socialists affecting changes everywhere. With viewpoints altered, growing numbers of people had left the old political paths and joined the S.D.F. on the road to Socialism. Still larger in number, however, were those beginning to see the cul de sac of the old way, yet fearing to take the new.

This was expressed in such ways as the appearance in many districts of political bodies, definitely Labour but varying in degrees of enlightenment, courage and independence—to its credit the Bristol L.E.A. was always politically independent.

Strangely enough, to the minds behind these movements, the accuracy of the scientific expositions of the S.D.F. seemed as much a source of irritation as conviction, but there was no logical alternative to Socialism, and an agitation grew for it in a different form. "Not the imported variety expounded by the German Jew Karl Marx, which might be

alright for continental minds, but something British—sentimental and popularly phrased,” they seemed to say.

Three weekly papers came into being :

The Workman's Times (edited by “Antolycus”—Joe Burgess); *The Clarion* (edited by Robt. Blatchford), and *The Worker's Paper The Labour Leader*. All these did a great work in educating the workers to the necessity of independent Labour politics and in translating Socialist principles into popular parlance.

A NEW DEPARTURE

in Bristol, in '94, was a Boys' Socialist Club. This was founded and met Sunday mornings in a Baptist Mills Coffee House, opposite St. Simon's Church. J. Watts Treasure was leader and organiser. Literature and nature study, rambles and games (cricket and football) were its chief features. It filled a want, and regret was great when lack of financial and tutorial help—the “elders” were so busy teaching adults!—caused it to close down.

1898 saw a second venture amongst the young—a Socialist Sunday School. As will be readily understood, the membership of the Bristol Socialist Society, which sponsored it, was of all faiths—Christians and Jews, Secularists and Spiritualists, Marxians and Fabians, Theists and Theosophists, orthodox as well as heterodox thinkers, all kinds—yet “Socialists all”—and a preliminary discussion was as to the line on which Socialist teaching should be imparted to the young. All agreed it should not be dogmatic, but Secularists naturally felt a Christian bias to the teaching of Socialism was not right; Theists had their views, whilst Marxians demonstrated the final futility of the Fabian line of final utility, and so on! One crowning truth the discussion emphasised—that the moral truths of all faiths found highest expression in Socialism, so an embracing definition was given on cards that invited subscriptions to the school funds and indicated the accepted basis of its tuition, viz :

“SOCIALISM IS A RELIGION

teaching Morality and the Brotherhood of Man as taught by Christ and others. Its central principle (its God) is Love—Love of Humanity.

It strives to abolish unjust laws and customs which enable the idle rich to rob the industrious poor. It demands honesty, truthfulness, frankness of character, and purity of life.”

A “formula” that will stand a deal of scrutiny!

The School met on Sunday afternoons in the Shepherds Hall. About eighty to a hundred scholars enrolled, partly from members' children, but mainly from other children living in poor circumstances, from the poorest streets. All mixed freely.

Together in the School in a spirit of comradeship. Around R. S. (superintendent) and S. (secretary) were a gallant band of teachers—Mr. and Mrs. Will Sharland, John Sharland, Miss Ann Treasure, and Miss Day attended week after week, and several others gave frequent assistance.

Will Sharland taught all to sing some of the great songs, such as Lowell's *True Freedom*, Carpenter's *England Arise*, Macguire's *Hey for the Day*, and Gregory's *Who to Make a Merrie England*. Very few of such schools were in existence anywhere in the land, and Harry Lowerison (of *The Clarion*) gave valuable teaching hints. F. J. Gould (then of Leicester) also sent text books of “ethical teaching,” and came in person to address the scholars and teachers. Gilliard wrote a pantomime with a Socialist moral, which was several times successfully performed by the elder children.

Altogether it was a fine work, but like its forerunner, cost a lot of money as well as time, and after three or four years for a combination of these reasons, the effort had to be abandoned.

It was an important sphere of work, however, that was bound to be revived, and later on at least two more endeavours were made to establish a Socialist Sunday School. These were in rooms rented to the Bristol Socialist Society facing the Horsefair, and known as “The Socialist Centre” (near the present Typographical Association's Institute).

Ben Tillett opened one of these Schools, and J. Watts Treasure again took active part in it.

Neither were permanently established, but all these efforts paved the way for the I.L.P.'s present success-

ful School at the Kingsley Hall, and the Socialist Guild of Youth Movement.

A SORRY STORY

must be told of some events of '94-'95. Gore was known to all as a "Christian" Socialist, but most of his Socialist comrades were amazed when at a meeting of the School Board he opposed the appointment of a young Jewess as a pupil teacher on the grounds that she could not conform to the rules (*re* religious teaching), and that she was a member of the Jewish faith.

The Bristol Socialist Society asked him to meet his fellow members and explain, which he did, when with one dissentient, a resolution was passed and sent to the press, "repudiating his action . . . as being utterly opposed to the spirit and principles of Socialism."

In their view the correct policy was that which Gore supported in his election address, and which was then being energetically advocated by the Rev. Stewart D. Headlam and the Church Socialists—"secular subjects only in State schools."

Other differences arose, and the breach so widened that at the January, 1895, School Board Election the Society withheld its support of his candidature, and many members transferred their energies to the L.E.A.'s nominee (Hy. Jolliffe) who was comfortably returned fourth on the list with 13,868 votes, but with 15,442 Gore headed the poll.

BRISTOL EAST.

A few weeks later Sir Jos. D. Weston died, and a parliamentary vacancy thus occurred in East Bristol, which brought a further cleavage. Three years earlier ('92), West Ham had returned Keir Hardie as an Independent Labour representative to the House of Commons, where his valiant efforts had won the admiration of Socialists and advanced Labourites everywhere. Bristol's Labour forces, although without funds, were very keen on sending him the seconder which this vacancy made possible, and the Trades Council, L.E.A., and the B.S.S. united for the purpose.

At their first joint meeting, E. H. Jarvis stated that he had a letter from Hardie (replying to one he had unofficially sent him) fearing Tom Mann would be unable to stand, and

asking if Gore was a likely candidate, and if so would the local Socialists and Labour men support him. This point was settled right away, the meeting (one only dissenting) deciding that they could not officially support him. Gore was informed, and said that whilst some friends were pressing him to fight, he would not do so against a nominee of the local movement.

Busy days of search for a suitable candidate followed. As a deputation Gilliard and Brabham went to London and urged Will Thorne, Pete Curran, and others to come forward. Fred Brocklehurst and Sam Hobson also visited Bristol in the hope of helping to a satisfactory outcome—but all was in vain.

TORY—LABOUR.

Then a Mr. Renwick suggested the name of D. J. Holmes (chairman of the T.U.C. Parliamentary Committee) whose union (the United Textile Factory Workers) would, he said, "be sure to provide some of the expenses, and doubtless the remainder would be forthcoming."

Like that of most Lancashire textile workers, Holmes' political outlook was of conservative colour, and the Socialist side of the meeting were aghast. Strange as it may now read, to the trade unionist side of that meeting, however, no difficulty presented itself. Said they, the one point on which we as a local conference is united is trade unionism. Holmes is sound on that. We have raised no objection to the Socialist opinions held by the other men approached—they had a perfect right to such opinions, and so had Holmes to his!

The Socialists were in a quandary—could they support a non-socialist in the circumstances? They were impressed by the fact that their trade unionist colleagues in this "joint" election work had loyally accepted all the decisions arrived at. Couldn't they be equally magnanimous. Whether Holmes or the trade unionists knew it or no, the mere fact that they were taking a working class view of affairs, inevitably meant sooner or later an acceptance of Socialism (a Marxian dictum that subsequent events have proved to the hilt).

Yes, they would be loyal—a decision only possible to philosophers and men of great faith. Mr. Ren-

wick was then authorised to wire Holmes an invitation to stand "if he could find the money."

Two or three days elapsed without reply, then the fact leaked out that the telegram had not been sent as instructed, but in two parts—the first to Holmes and the second, *re* finance, to a Society interested in "currency" reform. This was too big a pill for either the Socialists or Trades Unionist to swallow. Unanimously now was the invitation withdrawn, but there was still no candidate, and election day less than a week ahead! With great reluctance it was then decided to take no further part in the election. Then

GORE STEPPED IN.

He had been preparing well behind the scenes, and immediately announced himself as an independent working man's candidate. Throughout the constituency his address was distributed, and with a programme that O'Grady said had been trimmed by the enemy. Debatable that may be, but certain is it that he received support such as no Labour or Socialist candidate previous or since has commanded—or probably desired. Vague on references to Ireland, he caught votes of many conservatives and anti-home rulers, and he got "the Trade" behind him, their dread of "municipalisation of the Drink Traffic," which he rightly advocated, being less or more remote than the pressing Liberal policy of local veto. "Vote for Gore who will oppose all teetotal tyranny and injustice," concluded one poster issued by the licensed victuallers. The question of unemployment he gave much prominence to, and this brought several leading Labour men from London to speak for him. The principle (*sic*) being that any weapon was good enough to beat the Government with on that question "the devil or a broomstick," which also induced some locals (Paul and Enid Stacy, Harold Brabham, and Whitefield) to support him. Otherwise practically the whole of the local movement kept away from the contest, but Gore was a skilful fighter and had a strong personal following. The campaign was over in four days and the East rang with his appeal. Enormous and excited crowds awaited the result at St. George, which was

Sir W. H. Wills (Lib.) 3,740
H. H. Gore (Ind. Lab.) ...3,608

Liberal majority... 132

Apropos of the Bristol Boro' Labour Party's proposal for standardising Party colours, an interesting point arose in this campaign. Gore used the same colour as he had in his contests for the Council as a Socialist—red. This, of course, was also the colour of the Liberals, who frequently accused him of sailing under false colours.

SOCIALIST GROWTH.

Dissemination of Socialist ideals and principles had been widespread over the past ten or twelve years. In addition to the very active advocacy and teaching of "Marxist" Socialism by the Social Democratic Federation, there was the great educational work of the Fabian Society. Early in the field, it was formed in January, '84, this body had by written and spoken word vigorously propagated Socialism as the necessary corollary of social growth rather than the prosecution of a class struggle; Wm. Morris in *The Commonweal*, and the Socialist League; the Church Socialists with the Rev. Stewart D. Headlam at their head; and various other groups had all been busy. By different paths all were bringing people to the same goal.

The result was that a large and increasing number of persons were breaking away from the old political paths, but in the main these were as yet unorganised along new ones; and to cater for this plastic opinion various movements started in different parts of the country. It was at this stage of development that the Independent Labour Party came into being.

Says Geo. Benson " : throughout the whole of '92 the formation of a national party was canvassed unceasingly, and finally in the autumn a small committee took in hand arrangements for calling a conference which was eventually held on January 15th-16th, 1893, in Bradford. Ninety-four delegates attended from Labour Leagues and Independent Labour Parties, twelve from the Fabian Society, five from the S.D.F., and nearly a dozen from Trade Union branches, Trades Councils, Socialist Societies, and similar organisations. The S.D.F. and Fabian Society dele-

gates made it clear that they came only with a watching brief. Keir Hardie was in the chair, and among the delegates were Ben Tillett, Ben Turner, and Bernard Shaw.

The outcome was the formation of the I.L.P. Practically all its founders were Socialists, and early members included Robt. Blatchford, Philip Snowden, J. R. MacDonald, J. Bruce Glasier, Joe Burgess, and R. B. Cunningham Graham. It adopted Socialism as its object, but a motion suggesting "Socialist Labour Party" for its name was rejected. It did not accept the teachings of Marx, but it would be incorrect to say it rejected Marxism. It rather ignored it. Sentiment rather than science was the basis of its reasoning, and in the main it fairly reflected the opinion it organised."

It "caught on" and went ahead. Branches were formed up and down the country, but it had not hurried to Bristol.

Here the Bristol Socialists' Society housed all socialists, by whatever path they had arrived. Marxist, Fabian, Christian, Secularist, and what not found ample room in it to work in harmony for the advancement of the co-operative commonwealth. Readers will have realised what an enormous amount of work it was accomplishing.

Immediately after the Bristol East By-Election, however, the suggestion was put forward that if the I.L.P. had been established in the city, affairs would have been much better arranged—that "as a purely local society" the Bristol comrades were out of touch with the national movement, and that the time had arrived when Bristol should take its place alongside other industrial centres and take its part in the great national and greater international movement.

A SPECIOUS ARGUMENT

was this! If anyone knew and realised that an international movement was essential to the triumph of Socialism, it was the members of the B.S.S., some of whom were of the very first pioneers, before even the days of the S.D.F.! They had kept in touch with the wider movement all the time, had received and discussed all its communiques, and in actual fact were looked to by it as its Bristol portion, but

THE I.L.P.

had to come. A direct result of the "Gore election" was that a branch was formed. It met in the Dings (Sydney Alley, Kingsland Road). The first secretary was Paul Stacy, with Frank Mills financial secretary. Truth to tell, its advent did not please the older bodies, some of whose members openly expressed hostility and in very harsh terms; whilst some others, equally hostile, but claiming no prerogative in Socialist teaching, challenged "the infant" to justify its existence by opening up fresh fields of work and gaining new adherents to the cause.

As originally formed the branch did not survive many months, but in Bristol East, at the general election of 1895, Sam Hobson stood as its candidate. Gore's poll of the preceding March had raised high hopes outside Bristol of a Labour gain, and to many Hobson's poll was a big disappointment, but judged by all true standards it was a good vote and showed a real Socialist-Labour awakening in the division—

Sir W. H. Wills, Bart., J.P.

(Lib.) 4,129

S. G. Hobson (Labour) 1,874

Following this election the East Bristol Branch of the I.L.P. was formed, and the movement in the eastern part of the city has ever since marched on.

The feelings engendered locally at the time were but a reflection of what happened nationally, and looking back over the intervening thirty-five years it is easy to understand why. Also it is more than ever patent (some, like Robert Weare, had predicted it would happen) that out of circumstances of the time the growth of a body like the I.L.P. was inevitable.

With a mission of its own it appealed to the awakening conscience of the British people in a way that the S.D.F. could not.

APPEAL TO YOUNG.

Particularly strong was its appeal to those whom John Morley scoffingly referred to as "young men in a hurry," although "Radical John" failed to realise that the I.L.P. (like all other bodies imbued with a vision of Socialism) would appeal equally to the young women.

As time passed the newer and older bodies understood one another better—learned to respect their diff-

erent view points—and found many occasions on which they could unite in joint work for ends they held in common.

The first of these was in 1896. That year, in the month of July, the International Socialist workers and Trade Union Congress was held in London and the occasion was thought fitting to arrange for Herr Wilhelm Liebknecht (the leader of the Social Democratic Party in Germany) to visit some of the industrial centres and address public meetings. Bristol was one of the selected places, and delegates from the Trades Council, the Labour Electoral Association, Bristol Socialist Society, and Bristol section of the Independent Labour Party, formed the preliminary committee to make the visit successful.

LIEBKNECHT'S TOUR

embraced ten meetings; two in London, and one each at Glasgow, Edinburgh, Bradford, Manchester, Liverpool, Oxford, Southampton, and Bristol. Bristol's inclusion was a high tribute to the work of the local pioneers.

Delegates from the Bristol Trades Council, Bristol Socialists' Society, Labour Electoral Association, and I.L.P., formed the committee for making local arrangements for the Bristol meeting. They first met at the Giants' Castle Coffee Tavern (St. Philip's Bridge), on March 23rd, 1896, when W. R. Oxley was appointed honorary secretary, with J. G. Green as assistant, and several additional bodies were invited to co-operate.

Amongst those who responded were the Engineers, Clothing Operatives, Bricklayers, Miners, Painters, Gas Workers, etc.

With a view to popular education in the life and work of Liebknecht, the committee asked headquarters to issue a suitable pamphlet, and Dr. Aveling wrote one. This was printed and published. 16pp., 1d., by The Twentieth Century Press, Ltd., that pioneer socialist press whose work has not received half its deserved recognition.

The booklet proved a great aid to stimulating interest in each of the centres visited. Nearly 2,000 copies were sold in Bristol. From it readers learnt that the German Socialist leader was 70 years of age.

"HIS SEVENTIETH BIRTHDAY

was celebrated in Berlin with as much demonstration of rejoicing as if it had been the birthday of a monarch, except that here the feeling was spontaneous and genuine." Besides hundreds of telegrams, which included over a hundred from other countries, and more than 900 cards of congratulations, the socialists in all parliaments where they had representation, sent special messages. For over 50 years he had been fighting, oblivious of self, for the people's emancipation.

Several years he spent in banishment from his own and some other countries. In 1850 he found refuge in England. For twelve or thirteen years he lived here, and met a fellow Socialist exile, Karl Marx.

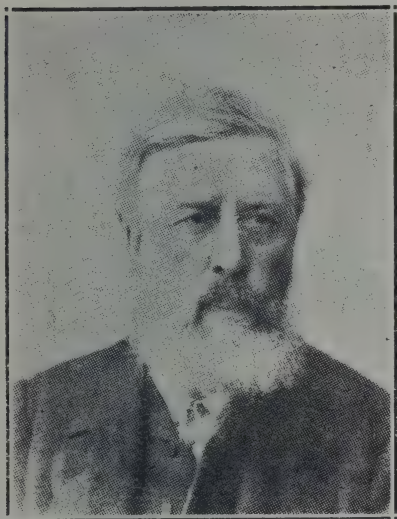
In 1867 he was elected to the North German Parliament. During the Franco-German War of 1870-1, with Bebel and others, he spoke and wrote fearlessly against the iniquity on both sides, and the German Government had them arrested on the charge of preparation for high treason. The result was that at Leipzig three-and-a-half months later, they were tried and sentenced to two years imprisonment.

HE SUFFERED IMPRISONMENT

on several other occasions, and was one of the foremost fighters of Bismark's Anti-Socialist Law. Of this period Bebel wrote, "How this attempt to break up the German Social Democratic Party failed everyone knows; but that it failed to do this Liebknecht has contributed to most efficiently," and during all that time—the twelve years 1878-1890—he was obliged to live at a little village called Borsdorf, separated from his wife and children.

At the time of this lecturing tour and visit to Bristol, "the turnkey was beckoning yet again." For the offence of *Lese Majestie* he had just been sentenced to four months' imprisonment, and on his return to Germany he would once again "take the place of honour behind prison bars."

It was a record of a life of service that inspired helpers to do their utmost to obtain an audience worthy of the visitor.



WILHELM LIEBKNECHT.

Many years leader of the German Social Democrats. (Visited Bristol 1896).

The date fixed for the meeting was Thursday, May 21st, and the St. James' Hall, Cumberland Street, was taken for it. Preliminary posters asked "Who is Herr Liebknecht?" and gave reply "The German Emperor knows!" The final bill was headed

"ENGLAND AND GERMANY"

and this attracted a lot of notice. Certain friction had existed between the rulers of both countries regarding the Jameson raid and events in South Africa, in which interest had been re-kindled by the return at this time of the Government Commissioner appointed to inquire into the incidents.

The hall, on the night of the meeting, bore a festive appearance, having been gaily decorated with a display of banners, etc., loaned by the Bakers, Painters, Gas Workers, and other unions.

All seats (except in the gallery) were charged for, and it was a delight to the committee to find them all full. From a thousand to 1,200 persons being present, then a very large number to pay for admission to a Socialist meeting.

Music by the Bristol City Band whiled away the waiting time. The

arrival of "the platform" was the occasion for a great outburst of cheering. Liebknecht's personal appearance—of sturdy build, erect carriage, with a head and beard of shocky, grey hair, and wearing the everyday attire of the ordinary workman, soft collar and all—made an immediate appeal, and the audience responded by singing *The Marseillaise*. The president of the Trades Council, Jas. O'Grady, was chairman, and after some well chosen opening remarks he asked R. S. Gilliard to read a suggested address of welcome. W. R. Oxley, seconded by John Gregory, moved that this be presented to Liebknecht. The audience was unanimous, and to this document of 270 words, O'Grady's signature was appended "on behalf of all sections of the Socialist and Labour Movement in Bristol." No signature of O'Grady's has ever conveyed so much honour to himself as this one!

Liebknecht, in returning thanks, said he regarded the cordial welcome as not so much a personal recognition of himself as of the movement he had the honour to represent. When, some months ago, he said, he thought of visiting England, the German papers said the English people would show their hatred of Germany by throwing rotten eggs at him. He answered in the press that there were two Englands as well as two Germanys. There had been difficulties lately between the Germany that was not his and the England that was not theirs. The movement he represented did not recognise these differences, nor of frontiers. They desired international solidarity, and if he helped forward that end he should be proud and happy.

He went on to say that capitalist society was founded on robbery, and had to live on robbery, which by colonisation meant robbing people abroad as well as at home. Both countries were at it. The jingo spirit was rampant in both countries. In concluding a lengthy speech, he hoped for the peaceful transfer from the evils of capitalism to socialism.

The speech was closely followed by the audience, which frequently showed its appreciation by rounds of applause, and prominent in this was noticed the Rev. T. W. Harvey, who evidently much enjoyed it.

A further resolution, proposed by

Councillor John Sharland and seconded by Tom Phillips, was adopted, pledging all to work for international solidarity.

LIEBKNECHT'S SPEECH

and the whole atmosphere of the meeting had a profound effect upon all present. At the close of the meeting he joined a number of comrades in a Social at the Crown and Dove Hotel. This bit of closer acquaintance left an indelible impression of the greatness of the man and the movement he so devotedly served. It was a well of strength and inspiration to draw on in later days of stress such as the passage of time failed to diminish.

Another unforgettable incident of that social gathering was the recital by Dr. Aveling of Edgar Allan Poe's lines on *The Bells*. Perfect in timing and intonation it was a revelation of the magic and meaning that

mere words can be made to convey—to say nothing of the insight it was to Aveling's versatility and skill. As a popular exponent of Marx his reputation was world-wide, but none of that gathering had the slightest inkling of this histrionic ability.

THE INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS

was held in the Queen's Hall, Langham Place, London, from July 26th to August 1st ('96).

As is the usual custom at International Socialist Congresses, there was a different chairman at each day's sitting, the six being E. Cowey (Yorkshire Miners), Paul Singer, H. M. Hyndman, Emile Vandervelde, Edouard Vaillant, and Jean Sigg. What an array of talent! The chairman of the British section's meeting was Jas. Maudsley, of the cotton spinners.

Apart from its international import, the Congress was a great event to British Labour and Socialist bodies, and Walter Crane marked it by the adaptation of one of his exquisite drawings—dedicated to the workers of the world—which is here reproduced.

The opening of the Congress was marked by some stormy scenes upon discussion as to the admission of anarchists to its deliberations. It was a phase of the movement that has a similar counterpart now as then.

Reporting on it to the Bristol Socialist Society, whose delegate to the Congress he was, Robt. S. Gilliard laid stress on this phase in the words: . . . "You know my leaning to the sentimental side of Socialism. You know my aversion to that kind of unfeeling criticism and excusiveness often exhibited in *Justice*, and to the harshness of the S.D.F. . . The Congress was saved from destruction by nothing else but the



INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY OF LABOUR.
THE TRUE ANSWER TO JINGOISM.
DEDICATED TO THE WORKERS OF THE WORLD
BY WALTER CRANE MAY 11th 1896.

scientific Social Democrats. . . The position required analysing, which I set myself to do, and I was bound to come to the conclusion . . . that sentiment alone does not supply a safe basis . . . and it appears that science and sentiment do not mix sufficiently to give a safe foothold for solid organising and working purposes. . . We have, therefore, only scientific Socialism left to us to accept as a basis of organisation."

After the Congress, Liebknecht returned to Germany, and from Berlin, on November 18th, he issued this greeting :

"In a few minutes I have to go to prison. In four months I shall be free again, on March 18th—a date of good augury! Good-bye! My and my wife's love to you, and fraternal greetings to all friends."

From each and all the towns he had visited in Britain many comrades sent him fraternal greetings and good wishes, to the prison at Charlottenburg—quite a lot were sent from Bristolians.

SCIENCE AND SENTIMENT.

Reading Gilliard's comments is a reminder of the wide knowledge the Bristol pioneers gained by mutual education of the subject of Socialism. In the realms of biology, sociology, history, and economics many became masters, and this was co-existent with a great driving power of sentiment born of revolt against unjust social conditions. In John Gregory—his verses and work—Miriam Daniell, and Helena Born was sentiment personified, and to recall amongst others the names of Robt. Weare, the brothers Sharalnd, Wm. Baster, Dan Irving, W. J. Petherick, E. J. Watson, R. S. Gilliard, W. R. Oxley, Jim O'Grady, Enid Stacy, Frank Sheppard, Tom Phillips, Harry Jarvis, and J. A. Cunningham. is to readily realise what a great power sentiment can be as a handmaid to science. In days demanding great courage and perseverance these comrades failed not.

It was during the period just preceding the International Congress that the Bristol Socialist Society projected the production and broadcast of a series of socialist bombs. The type of bomb Jack Flynn's shop is noted for and which "Touchstone" described :

"Not pistols, knives, or murd'rous things,
Assassins' toys, the bane of kings,
But Bombs, thoughts which
rudely shock
The slumb'rous mind, and gently knock
From drowsy brains those ideas
old,
That long were dead and now are cold.

SOCIALIST BOMB No. 1

was by E. J. Watson, and thousands of copies were distributed. It is an excellent example of the Socialist propaganda of nearly forty years ago, and extracts from it follow.

SOCIALISM means the social and economic emancipation of mankind; the establishment of a true solidarity of interests; the free enjoyment by all of the wealth created by all; and the full realisation of refinement, happiness and leisure by the whole human race.

Socialism knows no country or people, recognising in the worker of each nation a fellow being and a brother striving for the same end. It renounces patriotism and cultivates cosmopolitanism.

Society as at present constituted consists of two classes—the employer and employed. . .

These two classes are naturally antagonistic to one another.

Socialism aims at replacing this system of strife, competition and confusion by a social order based upon true equality, freedom and brotherhood.

At present the very life of society—the people—is looked upon only as the slave of Capital.

Instead, Capital should be its servant.

To effect this the land, mines, capital, machinery, factories, stores, means of transit, and all means of production and distribution of wealth must become the common property of all.

This economic change would serve as a basis for a freer, better, juster, and more honourable, orderly and beautiful life.

By educating the people in the real causes of their misery; by exposing political, social and economic lies and evils; by deepening the growing discontent that is upheaving the masses of workers in all countries; and by endeavouring to create a unity and harmony of in-

terests between fellow beings; every human creature can help towards the realisation of the great Socialist ideal.

DEMOCRACY *v.* BUREAUCRACY.

In comparing the present-day composition of the City Council with that of the Magisterial Bench, the truth of the claim that the workers must see to their own emancipation receives strong support. The powers that be only give way when they must and as they are forced.

Practically fifty per cent. of the elected members of the Council are nominees of the Labour Party. This achievement comes of intensive propaganda work over a long period, culminating in the persuasion of sufficient electors to so cast their votes. In our modern democracy no other result is possible, but that this change would not have transpired except for the workers' own action is seen in the fact that it is not reflected on the bench to which the appointments are not democratically made. Whilst democracy chooses fifty per cent. Labour, bureaucracy responds by appointing a mere 10-12 per cent.—and that grudgingly!

WORKING MEN MAGISTRATES.

Labour's first appeal for working-men magistrates, put forward in February, '86, and treated with ridicule by the Tory majority of the City Council when brought before it in March, '87, received impetus from the events of the next few years, and was granted by the Lord Chancellor in August '94. Then seventeen new Justices were appointed. Two of them were of the working class, and the "class" nature of the appointments was such that one of these individuals (Joe Pembury) was a Liberal prominent in the Friendly Society world, but in no other way connected with the Labour Movement.

Socialists and Labour men, whose view point, after all, was more than one of mere class, were as much irritated by the selection of Pembury for the position as they were satisfied by that of the other—the Secretary of the Trades Council, John Curle, although at that period Curle was a bit of an enigma to the Socialists. He was counterpart

locally of what Henderson was nationally, in that on the question of their "ism" he did not express himself, and they hardly knew what to make of it, but on at least three essential points he had their entire confidence. As a workman he was whole-hearted in a desire to help forward the cause of his fellow workers; he had an unswerving belief in the principle of democracy and was absolutely loyal to decisions arrived at by the movement. He spoke and worked for candidates adopted or approved by the L.E.A., nearly all of whom were pronounced Socialists, and in his own later contests welcomed the support that they freely gave him, without ever referring to their Socialism or his views on it. In a spirit of real comradeship, his attitude seemed to be "sufficient for the day is all that we have in common." Later on he joined the Fabian Society and so let it be publicly known that he had accepted the ideal of Socialism as his guiding principle.

LIBERAL *v.* LABOUR.

Naturally enough the fact that one of the two first working men magistrates was a Liberal, pleased that Party. They unblushingly put it forward as a proof that Liberalism was the hope of the working people, and at the following November election Pembury was their nominee for a seat in the City Council (Bedminster West Ward). Much capital was also made of his activities in the respectable realm of self-help Friendly Society work and of his *bona-fides* as a working man. Backed by the L.E.A., the B.S.S. contested his return with Baster as standard bearer. In a three-cornered fight twelve months earlier Baster had polled 32 per cent. of the votes recorded, but this time, with only two candidates (the Tories mainly abstained) and 25 per cent. fewer electors voted. The result was:

J. Pembury, J.P. (Lib.)	...1,381
W. Baster (Soc.)	 724

In the neighbouring Ward of Bedminster East, Wm. Gorman, of the Dockers' Union, with the same united support as was given Baster, put up a splendid fight against Wm. Terrett, an exceptionally popular Liberal who had represented the Ward for twelve years. To score 677 votes against his 989 was a fine achievement.

Gorman did not stand again until a by-election was caused in the same Ward by the elevation of W. Howell Davies to the Aldermanic Bench, in November, 1897, and then he was only 19 votes short of winning the seat.

A SOCIALIST LOSS.

Mention of these electoral efforts recalls a loss to the Party. That Gore's election to the Council for South St. Philip's had largely been a personal triumph was well known, and when he decided to retire (November, '95) the older Labour and Socialist bodies and the I.L.P. conferred in an endeavour to retain the seat by united action.

Baster's name was suggested, and he was willing to stand, but complication arose through the Gas Workers pressing a claim to run Harold Brabham. So Baster withdrew his name from consideration. The support of the B.S.S. was then sought by the I.L.P. for an I.L.P. nominee, but that body was not willing to act then except as part of the whole Movement. In the end unity was found to be impossible of achievement, and the I.L.P. were left to run a candidate alone. It was a most unpropitious opening for a new Party's first municipal fight.

R. T. (Dick) Daniell was their candidate, but the circumstances were all against a good Labour poll. The result was that a Conservative was elected Councillor for the first time in the history of the Ward.

J. S. Naish (Ind. C.) 612

A. Essery (Lib.) 479

R. T. Daniell (I.L.P.) 270

Mr. Naish died in September, '97, and at the by-election the Liberals won the seat with 663 votes to the Tories 332, Harold Brabham securing 408 for Labour, and an Independent gathered 167.

Between these two elections came those of November, '96, at which John Curle was first returned for St. Paul's (unopposed), and Jas. O'Grady broke new ground in the District Ward, as has been earlier recorded. This was 'always looked back on as a very fine propaganda effort.

NEW WARDS

were created by the extension of the city's boundaries in the following year ('97), and the Labour and Socialist forces made a bid to share

their representation. It was no light task. All the new wards were on the city's outskirts, but the organised movement was practically confined to the centre—St. Paul's, St. James', St. Philip's, and Redcliff. Many trades unionists, of course, lived in the outer areas, but only a sprinkling of the active workers in Labour's political movement. So few were these in fact, that barely any organisation had yet been attempted in these districts.

A further difficulty was lack of cheap transport facilities, and speakers could not easily get from one side of the city to the other. Buses were not, and the trams terminated at near distances, such as the Three Lamps (Totterdown), the London Inn (Bedminster), and the Workhouse at Eastville.

Each new ward was to elect three councillors, to retire in rotation, and

LABOUR CANDIDATES

were nominated as follows:

Horfield—E. T. (Tom) Phillips.

St. George—W. Whitefield.

Easton—Jas. O'Grady.

and in Somerset, Wm. Baster ran as a Socialist.

The differentiation between Labour and Socialist should perhaps be explained. In a word it was of the bodies nominating. No composite Labour Party existed. That eventuated many years later and with it a decision that whilst candidates could, in their speeches or election addresses, advocate Socialism, they must be designated "Labour."

At its inception this rule met with much criticism and opposition. Locally the Bristol Socialist Society resolutely declined to alter its practice of calling a spade a spade and announcing all candidates for whom it accepted financial responsibility as "Socialist."

MOST FABIANS AND I.L.P.ers

regarded this as pedantic—an unnecessary insistence on a label. Said they, if Socialism is accepted by the people, what matters the name? To which the S.D.F. (B.S.S.) rejoined: Socialism is no milk and water affair of increased pay and reduced hours, important though those items are. It involves a revolutionary change in the basis of society—the entire abolition of the wages system and production for profit, by the com-

munity becoming the owners of the land and of the means of production, distribution and exchange, and organising the production and distribution of things essential to the well-being of its members on a communal basis.

To attempt this, they argued, without the conscious co-operation of the populace was to court reaction and disaster. The people could not be hoodwinked into a Socialist Commonwealth. It was futile, therefore, to attempt sugar-coating the pill of social revolution by calling it soft names. The work of socialists was to educate the people in the principles of socialism, and when that was done to the extent that the people understood its import and desired it, success was assured.

Meantime, *i.e.*, at the time of the '97 elections (and for years afterwards) this point had not arisen. The Trades Council, L.E.A., and the B.S.S. thoroughly understood one another, and it was rare indeed that the candidates of either did not receive the wholehearted support of the other. Excellent comradeship prevailed, and members attached themselves to the wards nearest their homes for the hum-drum work of electioneering, whilst speakers spent much time in crossing the city to give oral support at meetings. Nearly all these were held

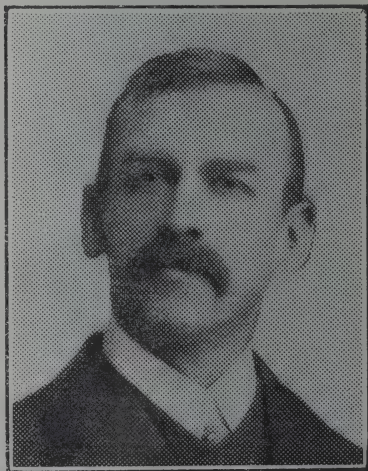
AT STREET CORNERS

and were chiefly assembled by means of handbills, a hand-bell, and door knocking. Another method was to march up and down a street singing a labour song. This brought folk to their doors, many of whom then stayed to listen.

At first Horfield seemed to promise success—the nucleus of a local organisation existed there in a few stalwarts who had already secured the election of Tom Phillips and Charlie Martin to the parish council—but it proved a difficult fight.

Despite the certain increase of rates that would follow on the parish being included with the city, Phillips as a parish councillor had advocated this course. Ratepayers of the type whose only standard of measurement is £ s. d., were angered and with the anti-socialists used this against him. Phillips defended his action by saying that the amalgamation was inevitable and that it was

based upon the logical application of sound principles of local government to the situation.



E. T. (Tom) PHILLIPS.

First Labour Candidate, Horfield Ward, 1897, previously member Horfield Parish Council.
(Died, 1927).

Further, he exposed the folly of parsimony, and expatiated on the right criterion of public expenditure being the value obtained from it, rather than its actual cash amount. Horfieldians were slow in appreciation of this, however, and placed him seventh of the eight candidates with 265 votes, preferring an independent Tory and two Liberals with 740, 684, and 610 votes respectively. Several times after this Phillips accepted nomination in other wards (once more in Horfield). With great oratorical, debating and educational skill he conducted the campaigns, but never again became an elected person, which pleased him, for it is an open secret that he could not be persuaded to run where there was a prospect of victory! He regarded socialist propaganda as his highest mission in life and looked upon contesting elections as a good means to this end, as people were more prone to listen on such occasions than in normal circumstances, although at all times was he ready to say a word in the public's ear. In the

EASTON AND ST. GEORGE WARDS

residential helpers—members of the I.L.P. and the L.E.A. were found to be more numerous and feeling more sympathetic. No doubt the earlier meetings of the B.S.S. in the adjacent park of Eastville had influenced local opinion, and moreover the I.L.P. were devoting attention to propaganda in St. George, where they were steadily building an active organisation. Whitefield, a strong, fighting personality, made an excellent candidate there (St. George). Although placed seventh in the result (eight ran) he secured 694 votes, the three Liberals with 1,333, 1,163, and 990 votes headed the poll. Liberals were also winners at Easton, both their men being elected.

The leader scored 1,241, and the next 941, but O'Grady was hot on their heels with 926, and thus, at the first assault on this ward, Labour gained a seat. It can be counted to Easton's credit that since then it has ever had a Labour Councillor, with latterly a full complement of three, A. W. Cox, E. Dunster, and T. S. Jefferis.

SOMERSET WARD,

comprising the inaccessible districts of Bedminster Down, Knowle, and Brislington, presented considerable difficulty. A couple of years earlier a group of the Bristol Socialist Society was formed in Bedminster, and the members of this, Walter Fare, Ted Baylis, W. H. Roe, Bob Dufty, etc., with Fred Jennings, the Rev. A. H. Easton, and others, undertook the Bedminster Down portion. Others, such as Will Lee, transferred themselves to Knowle, where Geo. Knight rallied railwaymen and other trade unionists, who worked like trojans. Sydney Pope and John Curle also assisted. The almost entirely working class Brislington section was looked upon as very hopeful, although known sympathisers there were few in number. W. A. Winchester, a local resident and I.L.P. member (the present chairman of the city's Sanitary Committee) came forward, and worked up a band of local workers. Baster had a big following amongst the miners at Bedminster Down, by reason of his efforts for them on the Guardians whilst they were on strike; and, in spite of his views—

he was ever uncompromising—was held in high esteem at Knowle where he lived. Nine candidates went to the poll and the fight waxed warm.

One of the most active speakers was Ted Baylis, a young and active member both of the B.S.S. and the I.L.P., and he made a mark in the campaign. Frequently he was twitted as "a boy" trying to tell full grown men of their conditions and to give them advice, to which he retorted: "Well, the main point is, am I telling the truth?—if not you, at any rate, are old enough to show me where I am wrong," and for the result of the resultant discussion Baster's supporters never feared.

Jubilation was unbounded at the declaration of the poll, for Baster was elected—third on the list—with 413 votes, just five above the fourth man (a Liberal named W. P. Jones). The two leaders were both Liberals, A. J. Smith and Frank Moore, with 594 and 550 votes.

WITH THIS GAIN,

and that at Easton, Labour representatives in the City Council now numbered four. John Sharland, John Curle (who took the place of Frank Sheppard, he having retired to devote more time to work on the Board of Guardians), Jas. O'Grady, and Wm. Baster. A formidable quartette, who laid the foundations of much good work that followed. Both O'Grady and Baster were returned unopposed in the following November, and Labour had at last secured a real foot-hold in the Council. The Labour Councillors initiated a new work outside the Council, *i.e.*, the holding of frequent public meetings in their wards for the public discussion of their work on the Council. These proved interesting and educative, and in a measure it is a policy that has ever since been followed.

In the new year (January, 1898,) the names of twenty more J.P.s were announced. Several Radicals were included but only one person connected with the Labour movement. That was E. J. Shellard, a member of the Trades Council and Typographical Society, a sound and highly respected trade unionist, but one not yet weaned from the faith of Conservatism. Chancellors are shrewd judges!

THE BRISTOL CORPORATION ACT, 1897,

in addition to extending the Municipal Boundaries, provided for a new Poor Law Union for the enlarged area from April 1st, '98. This included the district over which the Corporation of the Poor of the City of Bristol had administered relief since 1696 (that being the first Board of Guardians established by legislative authority in England) and portions of the Unions of Barton Regis, Bedminster, and Keynsham.

Labour took its first seat at the old Board in the early nineties, in the person of Frank Sheppard, who found it very difficult to make any impression on the all-powerful rule of Bumble. After a while he was joined by the Rev. T. W. Harvey and Mrs. Graham. Officially, these two were independents, but such humane sentiments did they express that Labour looked to them as its own.

Harvey was a powerful personality. In 1918 Mr. H. C. A. Colville published a memoir of him, and of this period it says, "... That he really regarded himself as a guardian of the poor was shown at his first attendance at out-relief, when a trembling old woman asked for help. To his suggestion that a seat should be given her, the reply came that it was not usual, whereon Mr. Harvey remarking that if he wished to be a Christian and a gentleman he could hardly remain seated when an old lady was standing before him, carried round his own chair for her use, a battle which had not to be fought out again."

In the same book Frank Sheppard is quoted: "... no sooner did he (the Rev. Harvey) find what the atmosphere of the system was than he became a disturbing factor. Three things we set out to do:

First, the removal of the children from the workhouse;

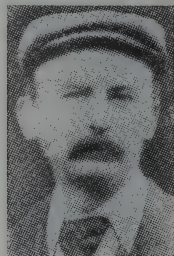
Secondly, the establishing of proper hospital accommodation for the sick, with resident medical officer, and a properly equipped paid nursing staff.

Thirdly, the more humane and better payment to the outdoor poor, and also, should be added, the proper classification of the inmates and a complete revolution as to treatment of the epileptic and imbeciles ... the barriers to be broken down

were formidable ... no one, unless they knew what the poor law system was and what it is now can realise the revolution that has been effected."

"THE BEST MEMORIAL

of his work on the Board," wrote J. A. Cunningham, "is the fine group of 14 Children's Cottage Homes, Convalescent Home and Lecture Hall, at Downend, and the scattered homes in various parts of Bristol, which were the fruits of his initiative and energy while chairman of the Children's Committee. This meant removing 500 children from workhouse gloom to share the public schools and normal life of the city."



J. A. CUNNINGTON.

(An early member Bristol Socialist Society. Elected Guardian, 1899. For a considerable time Secretary Bristol Branch Shop Assistants. Elected to School Board, 1901, served till its abolition in 1903, was immediately co-opted by the City Council to serve upon the Education Committee, which he did with credit).

In 1904 the cottage homes at Downend were opened with much ceremony. It gave Harvey great joy to be present, and when the new visitors' book was handed to him to sign he entered his name, and in the column for remarks just added the two words "Laus Deo."

DISTRESS AND DISTRUST.

The early months of '95 brought another period of extensive unemployment and severe distress, with a Mayor's Committee in existence to raise funds for relief. The Guardians found work for some, as was customary, in the stoneyard, stone-breaking. The weather was cold and wet, and so crowded was the yard that protection was available for only

about a third of the number employed there, the remainder having to work in the open.

On January 12th, Harvey had suggested that a temporary shed should be erected to protect the men from the severity of the weather. Six weeks later he was again pressing the matter before the Board, and laid much stress on the fact that the men were there because they were destitute, not because they were criminals.

Typical of the attitude of the Board towards the poor was a discussion, during the same period (January, '95), as to whether they should increase the grant for coal whilst this cold weather lasted, from fourpence to sixpence per week. Some members impressed the importance of economy, and dwelt on the difficulties of struggling rate-payers, whilst others thought that if the grant was increased it should be in coal and not money, lest the recipients spend it wrongly, and in the end it was decided that the grant remain at fourpence!

TO GUARD THE POOR

was regarded by Sheppard, Harvey, and Mrs. Graham, as the first duty of a Poor Law Guardian, and the new humanitarian ideas they brought to the attention of the Board were strongly opposed by most of the old members. One of these said he admired the zeal of these new members, but when they had been there a little time they would get like the old Guardians—a little more practical. A great many things they were proposing had been dealt with by the old members . . . as to doing away with oakum picking and stone breaking, they would find they could do nothing of the kind.

Fitting, indeed, was Harvey's comparison of the treatment meted out to that of criminals—oakum picking and stone breaking—both being tasks given to inmates of prisons serving sentences with hard labour.

THE "NEW MEMBERS"

were not to be denied, however. Time and time again they pressed forward new claims and new proposals. Oliver Twist was again asking for more, and the humanising of the poor law administration had begun.

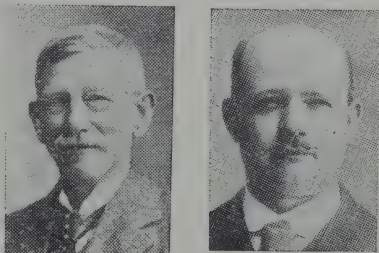
Slowly but surely the numbers of this little group were added to. J. A. Cunningham was elected in 1899, and for twenty years rendered yeoman assistance. Other early accessions were C. J. Satterley, T. C. Lewis, Mrs. Webb, Mrs. Lloyd, and Mrs. Tillett—to name a few, and there were several others. In this



MRS. TILLETT. MRS. LLOYD. MRS. WEBB.

(Three early Labour Women Guardians of the Poor. Mrs. Webb is now a City Councillor and Justice of the Peace).

connection Geo. Thompson must be mentioned. One of the earliest, he was first elected as an independent, but, naturally sympathetic to the needs of the poor, he frequently found himself in accord with the Labour view, and joined the Party (I.L.P.). Brought up in a London slum, with little of what is termed "education," he was of an extremely alert mind, and with a perfect flair for discovering scandals. To the poorest folk who suffered most he was very accessible and helpful, and was a valuable acquisition to the Party.



GEO. THOMPSON

T. C. LEWIS

(early Labour Guardians of the Poor).

In no department of local administrative life, perhaps, has such a revolution favourable to the poor been accomplished, as in connection with Poor Law work.

Two Labour Guardians served as chairmen of the Board with distinction—Frank Sheppard and T. C. Lewis—and now that, in accordance with the recent Act of Parliament, that body has been dissolved and its duties placed in the hands of a Committee of the City Council, it is devoutly to be hoped that this excellent progress will not be lost or its development retarded.

Future historians will probably look back on

TWO DECADES,

the last of the nineteenth and first of the twentieth centuries, as those in which the Socialist movement became firmly established in Great Britain. It was so in Bristol. The eighties was to the pioneers—the nineties and early years of the new century saw fructification of the seed they had sown. The education of the people in Socialist principles and the organisation of the converted for its realisation went on apace. The year 1895 saw the beginning, locally, of two extensions to this work. Both were designed with the dual purpose of

PLEASURE AND PROPAGANDA,

and both performed work of real tangible value, but difficult of estimation. The Bristol Socialist Rambling and Propaganda Society and the Bristol Section of the Clarion Cycling Club and Scouts are referred to.

The former was really a part of the B.S.S., although its membership extended to others. The idea emanated from the fertile brain of W. J. Petherick, and its stated object was "to take rambles and excursions for physical and intellectual recreation, also to promote social intercourse amongst its members and do propaganda work in the rural districts." Its first committee was very comprehensive: Mr. and Mrs. J. A. Coneybeare, Mrs. Jarvis, J. E. Martin, F. M. Heffer, H. C. Bonner, and A. Musgrave, with S. Bale as secretary, and J. Dagger, treasurer.

For a dozen years or more this body organised

EVERY SUMMER,

from April to September inclusive, fortnightly (during some seasons weekly) Saturday afternoon and holiday time rambles. Kingsweston, Coombe Dingle, Frenchay, Keynsham, and Dundry, were the favourite rendezvous, with diversions to Abbots Pool, Failand, Flax Bourton, Almondsbury, etc.

Frequently a hundred or more members and friends, with their wives and children, attended. Miles of country lanes and fields were traversed, tea being partaken of at a pre-arranged beauty spot, after which games were participated in. On many occasions Will Sharland's choir delighted all by rendering of part songs and glees, and the walk home in the evening was enlivened by the singing of Socialist songs.

The actual propaganda was in practice less than anticipated, but always a quantity of Socialist literature was distributed amongst the villagers, and there was never a jaunt without a paste pot and brush handy with which to affix Socialist mottoes and texts to gateposts, stiles, and the like.

It was a practice of the B.S.S. at this time to quote such lines as "The paradise of the rich is the hell of the poor"; "Socialism means peace, Competition means war," on all its posters and handbills, and these were cut off for the purpose. Vandalism, perhaps, but the object was to save the human bodies and minds that were being sacrificed daily to the gods of mammon and capitalism.

THE RAMBLING AND PROPAGANDA SOCIETY.

The Rambling and Propaganda Society did work that was in many ways beneficial, apart from scattering seed by the wayside, much of which it was afterwards proved fell in good soil and bore fruit.

The rambles into the quieter atmosphere and purer air of the countryside helped to keep members fit for the everyday work of the movement, and quiet talks by the way on intricacies of economics and sociology resulted in considerable mutual education; another good feature was the development of the spirit of communal interest in each other, but best of all was that it brought old and young members into

closer contact. Gilliard, Petherick, Oxley, the brothers Sharland, Hobbes, and Gregory were often present and could but enthuse the younger comrades with some of their own indomitable spirit. A host of the "middle period" comrades have testified to this—the Lloyds, Cannam, Begbies, Nokes, Eady, Plattin, Hounam, Adams, Hardstaff, Hill (T. W.), Miss Gibson, and many more who could be named.

CLARION CYCLISTS.

The Clarion Cyclists worked on similar lines, but further afield, and of course, "awheel." They were a cheery band, with W. G. Barber as secretary, and the following were amongst the first members: J. Watts Treasure, Fry, Kaylor, Giddings, Baylis, O'Grady, Bale, Cook, Tiffin (who rode a penny-farthing), Oxley, Weaver, Cannam, Miss Day, and Miss Treasure.

Occasionally 'hikers' and 'bikers' fraternised by arranging tea together at the same place, and towards the end of the year a big united effort was made. Baster (who some years previously had lived at Bath) told a delightful story of how he had attempted to start a Socialist movement in that city. At a certain coffee house he hired a room and invited a number of sympathisers to attend to form a Bath Socialist Society. No sympathisers had turned up at the appointed place and time, so he waited half-an-hour and was still alone, and bethought himself whilst waiting a little longer. Still no one else put in an appearance. Then he decided to take action, and sent a report to the local press which was duly published. This stated that Mr. Wm. Baster having been elected to the chair, consideration of the object of the meeting was proceeded with, resulting in a unanimous decision to form a Bath Socialist Society to which Mr. Baster had very kindly consented to act as secretary (*pro tem*). It went on to record that a splendid spirit of unity and determination was shown at the meeting, which then adjourned to later consider further work and propaganda in connection with the new body. A Society of one!

The Clarion Cyclists and Socialist Ramblers' united effort, now ('95) was

TO CONVERT BATH.

On several Saturdays the Ramblers took train, whilst the Cyclists pedalled, to the city, and held open-air meetings in the Sawclose. This open space was corporate property, and it was customary to obtain permission from the market's committee before holding meetings there. It was not the policy of Bristol Socialists, however, in this matter, to do when in Rome as Rome does. At home they had always insisted on the right of holding public meetings at suitable places when and as they pleased, and their intention was to educate Bath in the way that she also should go.

Now, Socialist open-air "where very violent language was used" as the local press described them, were too big a shock for the respectability of Bath to countenance for long, and the authorities decided to stop the scandal, and to teach the invaders their proper place in the social and political arrangements of Bath.

The committee therefore instructed the police to intervene, and one meeting was stopped. This was too good a chance for Bristol Socialists to miss. The following Saturday more went over, determined to demonstrate and vindicate this principle of the right of unhindered public meeting and free speech.

The *Bath Herald* devoted half a column to reporting the occasion, "... the party coming over included Mr. John Sharland (a member of the Bristol Town Council), Mr. Wm. Baster (formerly of Bath), Mr. Jas. O'Grady (vice-president of the Bristol Trades Council), Mr. Butchard, and Mr. W. R. Oxley (secretary of the Bristol Socialists' Society). As soon as a start was made, however, a song being sung in accordance with the usual custom, the police interfered, and Mr. Wm. Baster who had just mounted the chair to speak was informed that no meeting would be allowed. Mr. Baster replied that he intended to speak, and that if the police took him they would do it at their peril. ... he only uttered a few words when the police pulled him off the seat and informed him that it was their intention to remove him to the station ... in Orange Grove ... his supporters following just behind, singing *The Marseillaise*. The affair caused no little excitement and soon drew together a large crowd. At

the station Mr. Baster contended that he had a perfect right to speak, and was prepared to fight the matter out. . . The police demanded Mr. Baster's name and address, and he was liberated. . . While Mr. Baster was in the station, a collection was made by two socialists among the crowd outside and the sum of 3/3 handed over to three tramps who were waiting for relief. . . As soon as Mr. Baster was liberated the party returned to the Sawclose and commenced to hold another meeting at which John Sharland spoke.

An announcement was made of a meeting to be held in the Foresters' Hall a few days later, with the object of forming a

BATH SOCIALIST SOCIETY."

This meeting was duly held, and with the assistance of Comrades Gilliard, Barber, Dagger, Bale and Weaver (all of Bristol) the object was achieved, Comrade Reynolds, an old S.D.F.er, being its first secretary.

W. G. Barber, writing in *The Scout*—a monthly journal for Socialists that was published by *The Clarion* in support of "Clarionette" activities—for November, '95, referring to this wrote, ". . . Being Socialists, we believe in rendering every man his due, and consequently tender our sincere thanks to the police of Bath for their kindly assistance. . . "

The society thus formed put in some strenuous work, and recalls the names of many valiants—Reynolds, Payne, Blackmore, Orchard, Love, etc., but Bathonians, nursed more than most for years in the gospel of respecting pastors and masters, have always shown reluctance to new ideas. Sidney Webb is reported to have once remarked that it was almost a pity their opinions could not be left unchanged for future generations to have as a concrete example of what Victorians' sentiments were really like! But Bathonians' environment, like that of ordinary mortals, inevitably changes, and with it now comes a growth of Socialist thought.

THE POLICE ACTION

was, of course, the presage of a summons which was eagerly awaited and would have been welcomed, but none was served, and it was concluded that the Bath Fathers were advised by those of Bristol—who

knew the calibre of Bristol's Socialists from experiences such as Black Friday—to let well alone.

Several times during the following summer ('96) the Clarion Cyclists visited the city and held meetings.

Out of one, held by the Old Bridge, J. Watts Treasure and W. R. Oxley were both summoned and proceeded against for "obstruction," but as the spot was not really a good one for open-air it was decided not to persist.

Socialist propaganda continued to Bath's rulers to be as the red rag to the proverbial bull, and this culminated a few years later (1907) in a battle royal between them and the local Socialists over the question of free speech. At Moorland Road, Oldfield Park, religious bodies held open air meetings, and the Socialists opened up on the same spot, but whilst the religious meetings were allowed to proceed unhindered, the police tried to stop the Socialists by prosecutions on the usual plea in such cases of "obstruction."

The Bath comrades rightly interpreted this as an endeavour to stifle Socialist speech and accepted the challenge. For many weeks the struggle proceeded. Reynolds and Paine both served sentences of imprisonment in Shepton Mallet gaol, and others also suffered.

THE FIGHT WAS HOT,

and public attention was called to the meetings which rapidly grew in size. Fine for purposes of Socialist education of the public, but the Bath comrades were few in number, and it became a desperate matter to them, and appeals were sent to Bristol for support. Morally and financially this had already been freely given, but it was a case now of taking the stool and "going to quod."

Mrs. Tillett (who was a member of the E.C. of the Bristol Socialist Society) very pluckily volunteered to go over and help them. The fact that Ben Tillett's wife would speak at this spot on the following Sunday morning was made well known, and a bigger crowd than ever turned up, many by now sympathetic and still more curious to see "her," the woman who would dare the authorities and the consequences.

Bristol comrades knew well what a fine fighter Mrs. Tillett was, and she made a fine speech. In opening,

she told the vast crowd she was proud to be present, prepared, and would, indeed, be glad to join those local comrades who were then in prison for defending the elementary right of free speech. She warned the authorities of the final futility of their repressive policy, and then lucidly explained the principles of Socialism that inspired her and her comrades to make efforts for their propagation. Her speech made a deep impression, and her final appeal to hearers to join in the work met with rounds of applause. She then returned to her home at Bristol unperturbed and unconcerned as to the summons that would presently be delivered by a man in blue, calling her to Bath again—but it never came!

THIS PETTY TYRANNY

which made no bones about imprisoning comparatively unknown and defenceless local workmen Socialists, was faced with a poser when the wife of one of Britain's best known fighters in the people's cause crossed its path. What would follow? Whilst, or if, it was considering this, other events occurred to place the gods on the side of the defenders of right.

It had been arranged to hold the annual meetings of the Trade Union Congress in Bath that year, and the date was the following week. Amongst the delegates was Fred Knee (a Somerset man born at Frome) a prominent member of the London Trades Council and the S.D.F. The day before the Congress opened, with a view to helping the local Socialists he addressed a meeting at the disputed spot, and spoke to an even larger crowd than Mrs. Tillett had. Feeling was reaching boiling point.

Next morning the largest T.U. Congress held to that date assembled at the Guildhall and was welcomed by the Mayor.

At the close of His Worship's speech, the chairman announced an invitation from him to the delegates to a garden party. This was

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL MOMENT

and "Freddie" Knee seized it. Small of stature, but big-hearted and powerful of voice, he was on his feet in a flash. Almost before anyone

realised it he said in effect: Mr. Chairman, may I express my regret at being unable to accept this invitation. As chief magistrate of this city, the mayor has been responsible for the persecution of my local Socialist comrades for weeks past, on account of their political opinions. Several of them have suffered durance vile. Yesterday I visited the spot in question and it was my pleasure and privilege to speak from it to a large assembly. As one who has had much to do with fights for free speech in the past, I say this is one of the worst cases of persecution I have come across, and in these circumstances it is impossible for me to attend the garden party—here he paused a minute and added—it will give me much pleasure to meet His Worship in response to the other invitation that will doubtless be forthcoming (the expected police summons) in another place and at some other time!

Beloved of many delegates, as Knee concluded and sat down there was a rumble of applause, and he had got home! Henceforward Socialist meetings in the city were free from police interference.

THE FIGHT WAS WON!

Quite recently it was suggested at a Bath City Council meeting that regulations should be drawn up as to holding of meetings at the Sawclose, and that permission should first be obtained from a responsible authority. To the credit of a Labour Councillor the sinister possibilities of this proposal were laid bare, and in saying that the Bath Labour Party would decline to ask for such permission, he reminded the Council that men were still alive in the city who had suffered imprisonment for the right of free speech and who would not hesitate about doing so again should the occasion arise. The reminder seems to have impressed other councillors, and the proposal was dropped.

Thus the victories of the past benefit a present that values them and that is willing to uphold them.

CLARION CYCLISTS.

The Clarion Cyclists also visited other places in Somerset. Will Pearson, a self-taught London docker, of whom H. M. Hyndman wrote, "his whole demeanour and

conversation gave you the idea of a highly-cultivated University man without the least assumption or air of superiority," and who was accidentally killed whilst at work in the London Docks in the late nineties and at whose funeral Hyndman spoke, saying, "we had lost a leader of his class whom we might never be able to replace"—toured Dorset and Somerset, lecturing from the Land Restoration League's van; and was supported, towards the end of the tour, by the cyclists at Congresbury, etc.

On three successive Sundays in '96 cyclists also visited Radstock, and with the aid of a few colliers and shoemakers from Radford, established a Socialist Group there.

IN GLOUCESTERSHIRE

they also did good work. The Parish Councils' Bill (1894) which, for the first time, gave the agricultural workers a voice in the administration of their local affairs, stirred the interest of the country folk, which, wherever possible, was taken advantage of by Socialists for the inculcation of their principles. A case of outstanding interest arose at Berkeley, where, in March, '95, J. H. Alpass was elected to the Parish Council of Hamfallow, and was also returned at the top of the poll (three candidates for two seats) for the parish of Hinton (Sharpness) of the Thornbury Rural District Council. Alpass was a very young



J. H. ALPASS

(Now Bristol Central's Labour M.P.)

man, he was frequently referred to as the youngest parish councillor in England, filled with a keen desire to serve the poor and oppressed, and his outlook was fashioned by the ideals of the I.L.P., which was making great headway.

A bundle of energy and sincerity, his presence was soon felt, and with Will Paul, of the Sharpness dockers, and a few others, a campaign to educate the district in the new gospel of hope was enthusiastically entered upon.

In this several Bristol comrades rendered service whenever possible.

The *Citizen* (of Gloucester) for May 17th, 1897, reports, "Berkeley Market Place was on Saturday night last the scene of much commotion and rowdyism. The Berkeley and Sharpness I.L.P. had arranged to hold an open air . . . the first public exposition of Socialist principles in the town (meetings having hitherto been held at Sharpness). . . At 7.30 p.m., the meeting was opened by the singing of a Socialist song. . . Mr. J. H. Alpass acted as chairman. . . The square was well filled with listeners. . . Mr. B. Weaver (of Bristol) next addressed the meeting, and by the time Mr. W. R. Oxley, the advertised speaker, began his address, the meeting assumed still larger proportions. He had not proceeded far when it became evident that opposition had been organised with the view of breaking it up. A man took up his position at the corner of the Town Hall and began singing in a loud voice a patriotic song with the obvious intention of drowning the speaker's voice. For a while he succeeded, but he gradually subsided. The meeting was proceeding smoothly again when this noisy interrupter was next seen in front of the Post Office

WAVING A UNION JACK,

this time surrounded by a few farmers and local celebrities. *Rule Britannia* and the National Anthem were sung, and cheers called for and given for the Queen. This continued until the crowd listening to the Socialist speakers became exasperated, and a rush was made for the interrupter; the flag was wrested away and the singer hustled into a public house. Then the opposition began throwing rotten eggs, one hitting Mr. Reed who was speaking

from the Socialist platform. From this point onwards a regular melee ensued and excitement ran election high.

"About 10 p.m. the opposition gradually left and Mr. Alpass again addressed the gathering, expressing his surprise that certain individuals should condescend to lend their support to such rowdiness. . . He announced, being nothing daunted, that they would hold another meeting next Saturday night. Cheers were then given for the "I.L.P. and Socialism," and the crowd, one of the largest seen in Berkeley for some time, dispersed. . ."

In the early period of propaganda it was a frequent experience of Socialists everywhere to be denied a hearing.

On one occasion, at Cam, when Alpass was speaking, a body of farmers and others smashed the chair he was using for a platform and threw him down, but he told them he would return the following week and hold another meeting.

This was very largely attended by people from all parts of the district, including a bodyguard of his supporters from Sharpness, and the meeting then passed off very successfully and without disorder.

CONSTERNATION AND ALARM

was caused by an announcement, in '98, that Alpass would fight the Almondsbury division for a seat on the County Council. The retiring member was Col. Salmon, the big territorial magnate of the district, chairman of the Board of Guardians of which Alpass was a member, and had never before been opposed.

Alpass' committee was a mere handful of supporters, but the fight was waged with such determination as roused the countryside. Clarion Cyclists rode out from Bristol to help, and it was an irrepressible crowd that waited outside the polling booth until after midnight for the result. Votes were twice counted, and then declared

Salmon (Cons.) 448

Alpass (Lab.) 447

A wonderful result!

Amongst incidents worthy of special mention was a meeting of several hundred people, addressed by Keir Hardie on the Village Green, close to where Col. Salmon lived.

Cullimore, of Thornbury, often gave valuable assistance, but several more dependent working class helpers suffered victimisation when they associated themselves publicly with the movement.

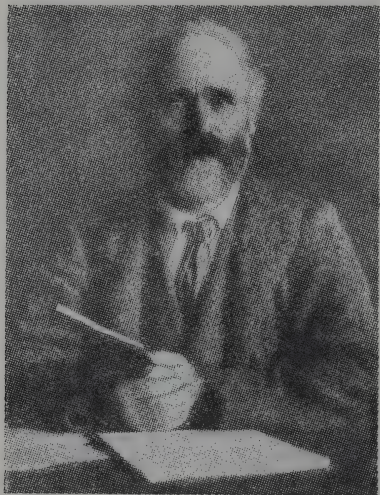
The cause has grown marvellously in the county since, as the result of the last Parliamentary Election in the Thornbury Division clearly testified, when the Labour candidate, Godfrey Elton, M.A., in a three cornered contest came within 300 votes of winning the seat.

Alpass is now the popular M.P. for Bristol Central, and has proved himself to be still a fine fighter in the cause of Labour and his constituents, to whom he has become endeared. Without doubt, many fights are yet ahead of him and that he will face and overcome them all, none know better than those who shared with him the pioneer days that preceding notes have recounted—days that to "Bert" himself must be full of happy memories.

KEIR HARDIE'S VISIT.

Keir Hardie's visit to Gloucestershire recalls earlier speeches by him in Bristol.

Soon after his first election to Parliament he addressed two Sunday meetings at the People's Palace, in Baldwin Street, under the auspices of the Clifton and Bristol Fabian Society (March, '93). H. H. Gore presided in the evening, and Hardie spoke on "The Teaching of Christ in Relation to Present Day Problems." He dealt with many points, and said ". . . Christ's teaching left them in no doubt; the one thing He insisted upon was that everything that produced evil results should be destroyed and put away. Their system of government was wrong from the bottom upwards. . . 'Seek ye first the kingdom of heaven and all these things will be added unto you.' Do not let them go away with the idea it was possible for anyone to bring about a Christian condition of society outside themselves. They had no right to complain until they began to exemplify Christ's teaching in their own lives and persons. Having done so, whether they called themselves Christians or Socialists—which was the modern name for Christians—would matter little. . . The duty of Christianity



KEIR HARDIE, M.P.
(died 1914).

was to get rid of robbery. The Christianity of Christ was not a creed or a profession, but a life."

Replying to questions, he said: "The Church of to-day was not the Church of Christ... The private employer system should cease, and the state should be itself the employer and producer."

At the afternoon meeting, "Pensions for Everybody for Nothing" was his subject. At this time no state provision of pensions for the aged or infirm existed, only private charity, the poor law, and the workhouse. The need for change was fairly generally admitted, and after referring to various proposals, he said, he laid down as fundamental principles underlying any pensions scheme that it must apply to everyone who required its provisions, whether old or middle aged... and that neither directly nor indirectly should the necessary money be placed as an additional burden on the working classes.

Both meetings were largely attended, particularly the evening one, and his remarks were frequently loudly applauded.

ALPASS' C.C. CONTEST

at Almondsbury proved a great incentive to more intense Socialist activity in the county, and in '96 a

Western Counties and S. Wales Socialist Council was formed, consisting of delegates from S.D.F., and I.L.P., from Bristol, Cardiff, Berkeley, and Sharpness, etc., for purposes of mutual assistance, and its results were very beneficial.

A POWERFUL INFLUENCE

in all parts of the country was the many efforts initiated and sponsored by the *Clarion* newspaper, and in assisting and shaping these, Bristol played a part. Thus, the *Scout* (a monthly journal published by the *Clarion*, in furtherance of these schemes and which was full of valuable information and helpful hints for propagandists) for December, '95, contained a long letter from a Bristol *Clarionette* above the initials of "A.G.D." which the editor referred to as one "which should receive the attention of all Scouts who are really interested in the serious part of scouting work," and in subsequent issues of the magazine several articles appeared in elaboration of several of the ideas suggested.

One of the most effective methods of propaganda initiated by the *Clarion* was

THE CLARION VANS.

Several caravans of the gipsy type (horse drawn, of course), were purchased and fitted with accommodation for speakers, and these toured the countryside with lecturers as "vanners." Thus were many otherwise inaccessible places visited and given information by speech and written word (immense quantities of literature were sold and given away) as to the truth, wisdom, and necessity of Socialism.

The first of these vans, which was named "Caroline Martyn," after the great pioneer comrade of that name who had died just previously, was put on the road in 1897, and it was largely due to the representations of the Western Counties and S.W.S.C. that this actually set out from Bristol. Fenton and Mary Macpherson conceived the idea of devoting their honeymoon to this work, and had the distinction of being the first vanners.

Full of enthusiasm, they addressed innumerable meetings from the steps of the van during the whole of the summer, which was spent in South Gloucestershire. It was new

work for Socialism, and "the van" was a great centre of gravity. Locals joined in, and most week-ends found several "attaching" themselves and sleeping under canvas, whilst visits of *Clarion* cyclists from other parts, touring on holidays, were frequent.

In the midsummer, authorities everywhere organised

DIAMOND JUBILEE FESTIVITIES

to celebrate the sixtieth year of Queen Victoria's reign, but the Socialists had no heart for these "rejoicings." Robt. Nicoll's lines, written years before, correctly expressed their feelings, although few outside the convinced Socialists' ranks could understand—

An offering to the shrine of power

Our hands shall never bring;

A garland on the car of pomp

Our hands shall never fling;

Applauding in the conqueror's path

Our voices ne'er shall be;

But we have hearts to honour those

Who bade the world go free!

and on "the day" comrades from all parts of the county joined the van-ners in an outing on Stinchcombe Hill and fraternised, "far from the madding crowd." "Vanning"

proved a most effective and popular form of propaganda, and in the following years more vans were put on the road. The S.D.F. adopted it, and to Bristol fell the singular honour of also sending off that organisation's first "Red Van." It was purchased near Bristol through the instrumentality of the Bristol Socialist Society, and with Dick Greenwood in charge, started with a meeting in the Horsefair (June 7th, 1908). Very little imagination is necessary to realise that "vanning" is not everybody's job. It proved in practice to be very exacting and specialised work. Edward Hartley was probably the most successful at it, but amongst others deserving of special mention are Tom Kennedy (the present Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasury in the Labour Government).

An invaluable acquisition was the *Clarion's* cheap editions of Robt. Blatchford (Nunquam's)

"MERRIE ENGLAND."

The book of 208 pages was a popular exposition of Socialist principles, written in a simple, lucid way

around the proposition "given a country and a people, find how to make the best of that country for the people living in it." Over a million copies were sold, several hundred thousand at as low a price as a penny and threepence each. "Scouts" always carried copies in their pockets for sale. Grosses were so disposed of at Bath, and in Gloucestershire and Somerset, whilst in Bristol, Oxley, H. C. Bonner, A. Musgrave, and others, organised groups of comrades who sold hundreds on Saturday nights in Old Market Street. It was from a reading of Blatchford's subsequent propaganda book *Britain for the British* that A. W. S. Burgess was first attracted to the socialist movement.

As "The Bounder" used to remark, "Strewth, it paralysed em!"



A. W. S. BURGESS
(now Alderman of City Council).

THE CHIEF AIMS.

The chief aims of the *Clarion* were to make Socialists and to develop and maintain an all round spirit of comradeship. Its work, therefore, extended to building up kindred bodies to the *Clarion* Scouts and Cyclists, in Field Clubs, Dramatic Societies, Choirs, and so on. It promulgated no particular type of Socialism, and resolutely declined to discuss the differences of S.D.F., Fabians, or I.L.P. viewpoints.

Its activities all had counterparts in Bristol, although not all were under *Clarion* auspices, as, e.g., the B.S.S. Choir, and the Rambling Society.

Of the local Labour and Socialist Movement in

THE 19th CENTURY,

needless to say, much more could be written than the many items already referred to, but sufficient has been stated to give a good idea as to how the seed was sown, took root, and became established in the city. The twentieth century has seen an enormous advance. Before commencing that page it is well to mention just one or two seemingly small items, but what were of great importance in their way at the time.

The first illustrates and emphasises how the good feeling that existed between the Bristol Socialist Society and the Trades Council Labour Electoral Association was extended to the field of finance. Both bodies experienced difficulty in raising sufficient funds, and although the L.E.A. received regular sums from certain unions, and occasional donations from some others, in the beginnings and for a long while, more unions held aloof than supported them, whilst the B.S.S. relied solely on its own members' subscriptions.

The strenuous days of '93 and '94 brought both to poverty street, and as a way out a bazaar was jointly organised.

It was the Bristol movement's first effort of this kind.

Named

MERRIE ENGLAND,

it was staged at the Shepherds' Hall, on Easter Monday and Tuesday, April 15-16, 1895. For many weeks prior to its opening members worked like trojans to ensure success. Cannam, Hobbes, Begbie, Sharland, and others, made, erected and painted a proscenium, with drop scenes, whilst many others—women comrades in particular—prepared and collected materials and articles for sale at the stalls, and in the provision of side shows. R. S. Gilliard was organising secretary to the venture, which Robert Weare opened on the first day and Wm. Baster on the second, under the chairmanship of W. R. Oxley and Albert Vincent respectively. The net monetary result was a profit of £32 odd being divided equally between the two organisations, which was considered very satisfactory.

Another effort by the L.E.A. was the formation of

A TRADING DEPARTMENT.

A provision store was opened at 1 Lawford Street, Old Market, in charge of Mr. T. F. Sharland, with coal and tailoring departments associated. The idea, to devote all profits towards paying expenses of Labour representation, was inspired by the Co-operative movement of Belgium, which was working along these lines and proving a valuable asset to the Socialist and Labour Movement there. Several members gave voluntary assistance, but the new venture was not destined to be a great success. The difficulty was founded mainly in the feeling of loyalty members in general had for the existing co-operative stores a feeling that although that movement had not as yet seen the necessity for participation in working class political action, it would eventually do so, and subsequent development has proved the soundness of this view.

After a year or two the stores closed, but for quite a long time a trading committee continued to function in booking orders for coal, etc., on a commission basis, to the benefit of the electoral funds. Another

SOURCE OF INCOME

was from soirées and dances. At the outset the chief difficulty was the lack of sufficient dancers willing to assemble under socialist auspices as to make it a paying proposition. So, thorough in this as everything else, the Society formed a beginners' class at which members with their families and friends attended under the guidance of Jas. O'Grady and Geo. Knight to learn the "art." Many thus became interested and proficient, and for several years the monthly (at some periods weekly) "Saturday night" was a remunerative as well as a consolidating social side to the work. Geo. Knight's long continued services as M.C. at these happy gatherings were much appreciated by all and are deserving of permanent record.

PUBLIC COLLECTIONS.

When open-air were first attempted, audiences were hard to gather, and when assembled often so taken aback by the views propounded that to "go round with the hat" was an unthought of idea, and as sympathisers began to grow in numbers the feeling prevailed amongst the pro-

pagandists themselves that those responsible for the work should personally pay the piper. It was only after much cogitation and well into the nineties that the B.S.S. decided to give their open-air audiences an opportunity of sharing, by contributions, the financial responsibilities. The response was an instantaneous success, and a well was struck from which a generous supply of oil was ever after flowing and helping enormously towards easier working.

Four, five and six meetings were held every Sunday during the summer, from which a season's collections were some years large enough to cancel the loss that inevitably accrued from the winter's expensive indoor meetings, electoral fights and the like. Often appeals were made for special objects, such as relief or support of workers engaged in industrial disputes, parliamentary elections, and "free speech" fights, as any or all of these cropped up in various parts of the country.

Whilst still

FEW IN NUMBER,

the Labour and Socialist representatives, Councillors Sharland, Curle, O'Grady, and Baster, with Sheppard on the Board of Guardians, were very active, and had a steadily increasing public following, and collections earmarked for the L.E.A. electoral fund realised substantial sums.

THE T.U. CONGRESS

was held at the Colston Hall, in September, 1898, and was a great event in the Labour annals of the city. Twenty years had passed since its last visit (1878). Then the meetings were held at "The Athenæum," in Corn Street, and 136 delegates attended representing 114 unions with a total membership of 623,936 as compared with 416 delegates representing 188 societies and a total membership of 1,200,000 that assembled at the Colston Hall—evidence of the wonderful strides trade unionism had made in the interim.

Notable absentees from the '98 Congress were John Burns, M.P., Henry Broadhurst, M.P., Keir Hardie and Tom Mann, who were excluded by a rule proposed by Burns, and passed at a previous Congress disqualifying from delegateship all who were not actually working at their

trades or paid officials of their trade unions.

Over 140 Bristol and district trade union representatives comprised the local committee, the officials being John Fox (chairman), W. Roe (vice-chairman), Councillor John Sharland (treas.), Councillor John Curle, J.P. (Secretary), and E. H. Jarvis (assistant secretary).

Very thorough and admirable were the arrangements they made for the delegates' work, comfort, and entertainment, and on the authority of the Bristol Trades Council, an official programme was issued. The book, of 140 pages, was chock full of information, and gave in handy form a complete guide to the city, full of interesting matter and accompanied by some of the most beautiful illustrations obtainable. Nothing of the kind, for the small sum of sixpence, had been attempted before, and it was a credit to all the parties responsible for its production.

Outside the official arrangements, a special service was held at the Cathedral on the Sunday afternoon, when the Rev. G. Estwick Ford (vicar of Holy Trinity, St. Philip's) preached a sermon based on the text: "To shine upon them that sit in darkness and the shadow of death; to guide our feet in the way of peace." Some, cynically minded, sneered, but the address appealed to many, as the reverend gentleman was known to be kindly disposed towards the trade union movement.

Next morning the Mayor and other local dignitaries attended the opening ceremony at the Colston Hall, and

BESTOWED FURTHER BLESSINGS.

Seventeen years later (1915—amid the fury of the great European war) the Congress again visited Bristol, and the souvenir that was then printed and published by Bristol Printers, Ltd., for the Trades Council, contained some "reminiscences" of the '98 Congress, by J. Widdicombe who was then (1915) the Council's president. In a strain strongly savouring of the philosophy of Omar Khayyam, they were rich in wit and sarcasm.

"That 1898 platform on Monday," he wrote,

"WAS A STUDY.

Gentlemen were upon it who sincerely hoped their (Congress) meetings would be attended with very considerable success, that they would be very interesting and give pleasure to all, and add to the prosperity of the working classes of the country, and to the country as a whole. Cheers—of course. Who could help cheering such sincere hopes? . . . even though such sincere hoppers spent their life in more sincerely hating all Trade Union principles, in theory and practice. . . Being then chairman of the Parliamentary Committee, Mr. Wilkie had to preside over that platform of distinguishments and welcome the delegates. He did the thing in reminiscent mood until the end. Then he soared to an exhortative Utopia: 'Let them by all means possible endeavour to sweeten worn labour's bitter cup, seeking not to pull the highest down but raise the lowest up.' . . . It was a graceful flight. It was intensely poetical. . . It may be termed a piece of poetical diplomacy—poetical not political diplomacy—that was sublimely safe. The seeking not to pull the highest down drew a halo of beams from the distinguished persons on the platform; the 'to raise the lowest up' drew cheers from the delegates in anticipation of the elevation. . . In looking back, it is a matter for gladness that even seventeen years ago the world learnt what had not to be pulled down in order to move towards the millennium. . . "

Nevertheless, the Congress of '98 did

MARK AN EPOCH

if only in the president's address. T.U. Congresses of that period customarily appointed the president of the Trades Council of the area in which they were meeting as president of the sittings. On this occasion the honour fell to Jas. O'Grady, and nearly four columns of the *Western Daily Press* were filled with a report of his address, which, in the official Congress record, occupied over twenty pages.

The speech of eight to nine thousand words, covered a wide range of important matters—child labour and the half-time system; the need for an eight-hour day; workmen's compensation acts; taxation of land values; nationalisation of

railways; state ownership of royalties, etc.

"Trade unionism was now faced," he said, "by a combination of capitalists whose object was to cripple, if not to crush, the forces of Trade Unionism," and he urged the federation of unions as a great need of the time. Referring to efforts for securing a living wage for all, he asked what was a living wage? It had been said, that which kept a man and his family in security and comfort. He suggested that individualism would not secure this. Competition meant anarchy. The aim, the

TRADE UNION OBJECTIVE,

should be towards collectivism, and the standard of living brought up near to our collective production.

"Jim" was above all a Socialist, and this ideal was ever in his thought and speech. The whole address was permeated by it, and he concluded a fine oration by quoting the closing lines of Wm. Morris' poem *The Day is Coming*—

" . . . Come cast off all fooling, for this at least we know,
That the Dawn and the Day is coming, and forth the Banners go."

Never before had the collectivist ideal of production and consumption been advocated from the presidential chair of a Trade Union Congress as the proper aim of trade union activity, and it was a point that raised much comment and discussion in the press of the country as well as labour circles.

"Socialism," as the capitalist press saw it, was bad enough when advocated by a few crack-brained sentimentalists or Utopians, but if adopted by sane trade unionists as their objective—well, it was unthinkable, and that was all to it. But time has shown that the working class have come to more and more regard it as the one hope of life.

During the week, of the items discussed, one, in view of the recent naval conference, is specially interesting. It was the adoption of a motion by Pete Curran, "hailing with satisfaction the message of the Czar in favour of

INTERNATIONAL DISARMAMENT,

and calling upon the Government to use every legitimate means to give

effect to it. Militarism being the great foe of liberty and a crushing burden upon the toiling millions."

Midway through the week—during the night of August 31st and morning of September 1st, to be exact—the Colston Hall was rendered untenable by fire. The origin of the conflagration remains unknown (although more than one wag attributed it to sparks from volcanic Socialist orations), but the large hall was almost entirely burnt out. Fortunately for the Congress, the lesser hall remained intact, and there the delegates re-assembled for the remainder of the week—many of them without notes and records that had been claimed by the flames.

The sittings concluded on the Saturday morning, and in the afternoon a procession and demonstration wound up an eventful week.

Many thousands assembled in Queen Square, where a huge procession formed up, and under the chief marshalship of C. Jarman, F. Freeman, and J. D. Pike, who were mounted, traversed a long route, *via* the Cut, Bath Bridge, Victoria Street, Baldwin Street, and Park Street to the Downs. It was one of the finest and most picturesque "turn-outs" of modern times, in spite of many effects having been destroyed in the Colston Hall fire. In addition to the number of handsome banners that were carried were a series of very interesting trade exhibits and tableaux. Of the latter, one by the Bristol Socialist Society gained special admiration from those with Socialist leanings. Inspired by one of Walter Crane's early cartoons—"Hands round the Globe," or "Workers of the World Unite"—carried on a lorry it consisted of a huge sphere (the world) around which sat workers dressed in the national costume of many lands, and with linked hands. This tableau in its entirety was afterwards borrowed by the Plymouth Branch of the S.D.F. and shown by them in a great Labour demonstration at the Hoe.

AT DURDHAM DOWNS

huge crowds awaited the arrival of the procession, and in glorious sunny weather, tempered by a cool breeze, three monster meetings were held. O'Grady, Curle, and Jarvis were chairmen, and locals, Cunnington, Martin, etc., supported Pete Curran, C. W. Bowerman, Jas Sex-

ton, and other national speakers of repute. The Socialist spirit of the local movement, and which had permeated the atmosphere of the Congress itself, was manifest in the resolution that was submitted from each platform and carried with acclamation, viz :

"That this meeting is of opinion the only effective way of removing the present anarchial conditions of society is by the State owning and controlling the whole of the means and implements of production, distribution, and exchange. With this object in view it pledges itself to do all in its power to secure the return to Parliament of those only who will support the following: a legal eight-hour working day, amendments of the Truck Act and Workmen's Compensation Act to prevent contracting out, and the nationalisation of the land, railways and mines. Further, it is of opinion that to obtain this it is necessary that the trade unions should federate nationally and internationally, etc. . ."

A good lead with an aim worth while in view. Most of the items referred to are yet awaiting accomplishment, but it is encouraging to realise that Bristol workers have endeavoured to fulfil the pledge then made, particularly as regards the return of Members of Parliament.

PRIOR TO THE CONGRESS

O'Grady was but little known outside Bristol. Here, for some years, he had been busy in many capacities, for the movement—in the branch room of his union and at the meetings of the Trades Council. With the Bristol Socialist Society in and out of season, and chiefly at street corners, advocating the principles of Socialism; awheel with the Clarion Cyclists, "hoofing it" with the rambles, and "tripping it" with the dancers. In many ways and all ways he was in everything pertaining to the furtherance of the new and advanced political and industrial organisation of the working class.

Irish to the core, emotional, and at the same time stern, with a deep hatred of oppression but no trace of malice against the oppressors, his speeches, couched in the simplest of words yet most beautiful phrasing, made a great appeal. And what an appeal fine language, whether written or oral, made to himself.

In the Parliamentary Election of '95 the oratory of O'Connor Power—then Irish Home Rule candidate for S. Bristol—was a sheer delight to him, although he was too well grounded in the principles of sociology and economics to be caught up by it. Mere words are futile, he used to say, to solve the problems of poverty and the lot of unemployed men and women who could be seen daily, often with little children, tramping the roads from workhouse to workhouse whilst looking for work and the means of life that was denied them by a capitalist system.

In '97 he was elected to the City Council, and in the following year his presidency of the T.U. Congress resulted in his name becoming famous beyond the city walls. His union, the National Amalgamated Furnishing Trades Association, claimed him as a national organiser. Soon after he represented them at a Congress in France and also attended International Congresses at Stuttgart and Boston. His reputation had become, as it has remained, international, almost world-wide.

His association with Bristol remained close, however, and right up to the time of his leaving England, about six years ago, to take up the post of Governor-General of Tasmania, he was a frequent visitor and one always ready to give assistance to his old comrades in the Labour cause.

His election to Parliament for East Leeds in 1906 was a cause of much gratification to Bristol Socialists, and they were amongst the first to offer congratulations, as they also did to another who was elected to Parliament at the same time—

J. RAMSAY MACDONALD,

who it will be remembered was then returned as junior member for the double-barrelled constituency of Leicester, only 60 votes behind Hy. Broadhurst who headed the poll as a Liberal-Labour nominee.

Since he first joined the Socialist Movement—in Bristol in 1895—Mr. Macdonald's career was remarkable and for some time he had occupied a place in Labour's front line, but he ever remembered his early associations with Bristol, and on several times came back to deliver lectures, etc. In '95 he spoke at the Shepherds' Hall under the Bristol Social-

ist Society's auspices, and early in 1896 delivered a series of eight lectures at the St. Agnes Mission Room, St. Paul's. These were organised by a local committee, to which John Curle acted as secretary, and were in connection with the "Hutchinson Trust"—a fund provided for the purpose of working class education in political and industrial questions, and administered by the Fabian Society.

Bristol was grouped with Southampton, Portsmouth, and Reading in this connection, each town being visited once a week on regular nights for eight weeks during January and February. The main subject was

"NINETEENTH CENTURY POLITICAL HISTORY,"

and was divided into the following sections :

- (1) The Making of the Century.
- (2) The Struggle for Freedom.
- (3) Social Legislation (i. Poor Law).
- (4) Social Legislation (ii. Factory).
- (5) Chartism.
- (6) Free Trade.
- (7) Moral Gains by Legislative Methods.
- (8) Later Democratic Developments.

A nominal charge of 2d. was made for admission to each lecture (1/- for the whole course).

It need hardly be added that each Section was dealt with in considerable detail, and a helpful list of books was compiled and recommended for home study. In practice it was more in the nature of a students' class and one that was very beneficial to all who attended.

A MORAL

to be drawn from the series, was that success to good causes must be preceded by persistent effort.

At the close of the period of years denoted by eighteen and the early nineteen hundreds a certain amount of detraction from Socialist propaganda was caused by the

SOUTH AFRICAN WAR.

In Socialist circles this war was generally regarded as a filibustering campaign engineered by the Government with a view to subjugating the independent Republic of the Transvaal and the Orange Free State to the interests of the mine owners. By a number of other citizens it was view-

ed with equal suspicion as an unjustifiable interference with the rights of small peoples to self determination. Meetings were held calling the attention of the people to the Government's line of policy, and resolutions of protest were adopted. All was in vain. War broke out, and its declaration let loose a flood of jingoism that overwhelmed all efforts for peace.

Thousands of miles away from hostilities, and with no likelihood of being brought into actual contact with the hardships or the fighting, many people went wildly mad with an obsession for flag waving, "patriotic" song singing, and the like. It was

SAFE JINGOISM

and of a type that denied to any others the right either to express an opposing or critical opinion. Bristol had an early taste of this. A public meeting was billed to take place at the OLD KING STREET BAPTIST CHAPEL, with the pastor, the Rev. J. Moffatt Logan in the chair, urging a policy of pacification, but in the interim of its calling and the date of its holding, war had been declared. But for this it would in all probability have been a successful meeting; as it was—! The building was packed from floor to ceiling, but there were no speeches! When the chairman took up his position to open he was greeted by jeers, boos and cat-calls. Union Jacks were waved and a general pandemonium reigned. Those connected with the arranging of the meeting agreed that it was an "organised" opposition, and it turned out to be of a kind that persisted for the next two or three years. Albeit there were a number of organisations as well as a strong body of influential persons in Bristol who

OBJECTED TO THE WAR.

These banded themselves into a joint committee, of which J. Pickles, M.A., was Hon. Secretary; Wm. Baster, chairman; R. A. Milner, treasurer; and amongst other well known active members were Mr. and Mrs. Swann, the Rev. Moffatt Logan, Major Edwards, and Messrs. T. A. Williams, J. Gregory, E. T. Phillips, W. R. Oxley, H. W. Gapper, J. Whale, etc.

This committee did a great work

in making known the facts of the position, and in endeavouring to cool the public mind of war fever, and so restore it to a saner conception of things; but found themselves up against it.

An important part of its work was out-door meetings. At these the Socialists and a few others provided the main supply of speakers, and often successful meetings were held; but then again many were broken up, and frequently Oxley, Phillips and Co., became subjects of police protection. An indoor meeting was announced at the Y.M.C.A. Hall, St. James' Square. This was specially to hear an address by Miss Hobhouse on "The Women and Children's Concentration Camps"—camps in S. Africa that were provided by the military for the women and children victims of the war, and which, it was alleged, were insanitary and otherwise grossly mismanaged.

Members of the Society of Friends were largely responsible for the meeting, and Mr. Jos. Storrs Fry was to have spoken, but it was a repetition of the Old King Street fiasco—only more so—for at times free fights broke out in the Hall, whilst the noise of demonstrators outside would have rendered hearing inside impossible, even had those inside permitted the speakers to speak. Mr. Fry was very patient, and when the crowd refused to listen to him, he appealed to them during a lull to permit him to read aloud a few verses from the Bible. For a minute, or two it seemed as though this request would be granted, but after he had read a couple of sentences, the "rioters" broke out again and he was howled down.

The scenes outside in the Square that night were beyond description, and it was only with the greatest difficulty that the audience was got safely away.

The biggest effort of all was on Monday, January 6th, 1902, when the committee did manage to hold a really large and successful meeting. This was at the Vestry Hall, in Pennywell Road, with D. Lloyd George, Esq., M.P., as speaker. In their many determined efforts to uphold the right of free speech in public meeting, the organisers had by this time learnt a thing or two. Elaborate precautions in the way of "ticketing," "stewarding," etc.,

were now made, but forged tickets of admission to the meeting were used. Several of these were spotted and their holders denied admission, but some opponents got in and caused occasional uproar.

The speakers were, however, able to deliver their addresses, although outside was a raging multitude which the authorities had great difficulty in keeping at bay. Lloyd George was immensely pleased, and referred to it as the best organised meeting he had spoken at during this period—he seldom got a hearing anywhere in those days!—the days of the Stop the War Committee, when all who did not back the Government were ostracised as pro-Boers.

It is to the credit of the Bristol Socialists that right throughout those hectic months and years they never lost sight of the paramount importance of *Socialist* propaganda. In spite of being busily engaged in the anti-war work, indoor and outdoor meetings were held every week and a purely Socialist message was preached. Often enough these were rowdy and were interfered with by the “jingo” crowd, but the red flag was kept flying through it all.

When

PEACE WAS RESTORED,

the Socialist Movement was stronger than ever for having gone through the furnace. All sections—the B.S.S., Trades Council, L.E.A., and I.L.P., now included a greater number of outstanding personalities than before. In addition to names that have already been mentioned, those of Walter Ayles, C. Gill, A. E. Ellery, A. A. Senington, F. F. Clothier,

C. Baston, F. Sharland, T. Jefferies, J. Milton, F. Freeman, E. J. Burt, and Ernest Bevin, come readily to mind.

BEN TILLET

also resided in Bristol at this time, and with his wife and daughters (Janet and Mabel) was a great asset to the Bristol Socialist Society. Ever ready to address meetings himself, Ben also used his influence and got many national speakers to visit the Society for the purpose of addressing meetings under its auspices. It was largely due to his inspiration and help that frequent big and successful meetings were held in the old Theatre Royal, the Empire, etc. Mrs. Tillett unsuccessfully fought the Somerset Ward for a seat on the Board of Guardians, but was later elected for the Bedminster East Ward, and on the Board proved herself to be a real advocate of the claims of the poor.

AN EXPLANATION

of the brevity of the references to the events of the South African War and the local work of Ben Tillett and his family during their residence at Knowle, is in the fact that the least known period of the movement's local history, *i.e.*, to the end of the 19th century has now been recorded in a detailed and permanent form and with a brief relation therefore of a few interesting incidents and references to the attitude taken then to some of the problems that still confront the working-class movement, the story must be drawn to a close.

Part III.

(the XXth century).

The dawn of the new century saw propaganda of Socialist ideals become both more extensive and intensive.



A. A. NOKES.
(Hon. Secretary, Bristol Socialist Society).

The B.S.S. and the I.L.P. attracted many new members, nearly all filled with enthusiasm that could only be satiated by definite and effectual work in the service of the cause. They were so numerous that it is hardly fair to single out any for special mention, but types are indicated in A. A. Nokes, A. E. Ellery, and J. J. Milton.

The first named, who is the present Hon. Sec. of the Bristol Socialist Society and sits on the E.C. of the Boro' Labour Party, looks to the education of the workers in the principles enunciated by Karl Marx as the economic basis of Socialism, as of primary importance. A student at Ruskin College, he was closely associated with the pioneers of the National Labour College movement.



A. E. ELLERY.
(First full-time Secretary, Bristol I.L.P., 1907).

A. E. Ellery, who joined the movement at Cardiff in 1897 (and is now an alderman on the Gloucestershire County Council) worked both with the B.S.S. and the I.L.P. In 1901 he was Hon. Election Agent when the former body ran E. T. Phillips at a Council Election in Horfield. Early in 1907 the local I.L.P. appointed him as their first full-time secretary, and he held the post nearly two years, when the party dispensed with a full timer until it appointed Walter H. Ayles to the position towards the end of 1909. Ellery successfully contested St. George West Ward in 1907 and gained a seat for the party on the City Council. This followed a gain in the same ward, in the preceding year, by Frank Freeman, when Wm. Whitefield also recorded a gain in St. George East.

These successes forced St. George Liberals and Tories to join forces in "ousting" Labour, as they had done previously in the Somerset Ward in defeating Baster; and in 1909 Freeman lost his seat, Whitefield just managing to retain his by the smallest margin possible:

Whitefield	1101
Hicks	1100

Meantime (1908) A. A. Senington secured election in Easton Ward.

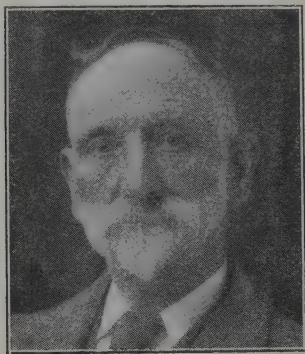


A. A. SENINGTON



J. J. MILTON.

J. J. Milton—who had done a lot of pioneer I.L.P. and Socialist work in Bristol East—gained a seat in 1913, in which year F. F. Clothier also was first returned.



F. F. CLOTHIER.

These three have been in the Council ever since, and served with signal distinction. All are Aldermen. Senington was Labour's second Lord Mayor, an office to-day filled by Ald. Clothier.

BRISTOL PRINTERS, LTD.

A subsidiary movement of the period was a meeting at the Caxton Rooms on March 21st 1908. It was called by Mr. G. Phillips, and amongst those present were representatives from the Amalgamated Union of Co-operative Employees, the Bristol Socialist Society, and the Warehousemen and Cutters' Union. This meeting appointed a committee, out of whose deliberations the Bristol Printers, Limited, was founded. On June 4th, 1909, it was

registered, and has rendered signal service to the movement ever since.

With one electoral contest, in 1909, the name of

ERNEST BEVIN

comes to mind. It was through the propaganda work of the Bristol Socialist Society that Bevin was converted to Socialism, and as a member of that Society he first took part in the work of the local movement. This extended over a period of several years, and in all branches of the Society's work and organisation he was very keen, from distribution of handbills to addressing public meetings. If there was one side of the movement that seemed to appeal to him more than another, it was that ever present product of Capitalism—the unemployed and their plight.

In every effort on their behalf he was busily engaged.

At the November Election of 1909 he was nominated by the B.S.S. as a

SOCIALIST AND LABOUR

candidate for St. Paul's Ward—a contest that was very keenly contested at the very low cost of less than seven pounds! and a slogan was "Vote for Bevin who fought for the unemployed."

During several years the case for the unemployed was pressed forward by the Right to Work Committee, a composite body of representatives of various Societies—the Trades Council, Labour Electoral Association, Church Socialist League, Bristol Socialist Society, I.L.P., Co-operative Educational Council, Co-operative Women's Guild, Christian Social Union, etc., and besides being very prominent as a speaker for this Committee, Bevin was for some time its Hon. Secretary.

An interesting item in his election address was the statement, "... Docks are a national necessity, and, as a Socialist, I believe they SHOULD BE NATIONALISED..." and the concluding paragraph read, "... Think! last winter in Bristol there were 5,000 heads of families out of work, 20,000 human beings suffering want, and 10,000 paupers, and you will realise the chaos, misery, and degradation brought upon us by the private ownership of the means of life. I claim that SOCIALISM, which is the common ownership of these



ERNEST BEVIN

(taken about the time he contested St. Paul's Ward as a Socialist and Labour Candidate, 1909).

things, is the **ONLY SOLUTION OF SUCH EVILS."**

At the poll, the Liberal (J. H. Gibbs) retained the seat by 1,052 votes to 663, and it is worthy of note that in seconding the vote of thanks to the Returning Officer, Bevin demanded that the register of the personation agent of the Liberal Candidate should be impounded. He alleged that the agent had marked some numbers of the voters polling and had left the room carrying information to the committee room. The personation agent denied the accuracy of the statement; and it is only mentioned here as showing the view then held by many Socialists on the question of anyone but the returning officer and the poll clerks having any record of the persons whose votes had been recorded. Labour and "Citizen" now stand side by side outside the booths securing this information from voters!

At the suggestion of the Trades Council, the

RIGHT TO WORK

Committee was slightly remodelled in 1910. J. Watts Treasure then took over the hon. secretaryship,

and the very vigorous campaign became even more so, if that were possible.

The committee was very emphatic in its demand that "every citizen of either sex be provided with useful work or healthy maintenance." Under the chairmanship of the President of the Trades Council (F. E. White) a conference was held on March 17th, 1910, "a goodly assemblage of representative folk being present," at which this principle was upheld and amplified by suggestions of relief works, reclamation of foreshores and afforestation (nationally) and various other schemes of local and national improvements, and an affirmation "that with the view to the making of proper provision for the supply of meals to necessitous children, the Feeding of Children Act should be made compulsory on all educational authorities . . . and power should be granted to local authorities to supply clothing and boots to necessitous children."

A CONFERENCE

held in April, 1911, declared, "The inefficiency of Labour Exchanges, and invalidity of State Insurance, as a remedy for unemployment, calls upon the State to organise the unemployed in industrial and agricultural pursuits, thereby partially removing the poverty and misery that now entail."

The mover, Frank Sheppard, said, "this might be a far-reaching resolution, but in order to get anything done they must go farther than it might seem imminently necessary to go"; and in seconding, Bevin said, "it was the right to live they wanted. They had no right to starve the industrial army of the country because the capitalists had not enough work for them to do, any more than they had the right to starve the Army or Navy because there was no war at any particular time."

With a view to settling any doubt as to the meaning of the resolution, A. Nokes moved the addition of the words, "and further declares that unemployment can only be remedied by the complete overthrow of our modern capitalist society."

Some thought the addition unnecessary, but by 35 votes to 30 it was accepted, and the whole motion was then put and carried.

NO DISCUSSION AROSE

as to ways and means, or the revival of export trade (as the latter, anyway, certainly would at a similar conference to-day), for this was before the war when Britain was securing a big share of trade in the world market and yet had a serious unemployed problem.

Rightly or wrongly Socialist Labour men then anchored their thoughts to "calling upon the State to organise the unemployed in industrial and agricultural pursuits," whereby those who would otherwise be unemployed and lacking the means of life would produce for themselves a healthy maintenance, and to the provision of free meals, boots, clothing, etc., to children. Predicating that Labour applied to land was the source of all wealth, they affirmed that given a people willing, through its elected representatives, to organise these two factors for the production and distribution of the commodities and services necessary to satiate the community's material needs, ALL WAS EASY, or at most contained only difficulties that could be overcome.

Questions such as "finding the money" suggested no problem, since it was held that no set of individuals, bankers or financiers, fulfilled any function that society could not itself perform on its own behalf if it willed so to do. So to the creation of that public will was the main energy of the movement directed. In the meantime it was deemed advisable and necessary to secure as much amelioration from the evil results of capitalism as was possible. Was there much wrong with that attitude?

NATIONAL EDUCATION

is another question that occupied a prominent position in matters calling for immediate attention.

It was in this connection that the first meeting ever held by a section of the Socialist-Labour Movement in the Colston Hall was organised. This was on the initiative of the education committee of the S.D.F., and it took place on Sunday, April 8th, 1906, at 6.30 p.m.

Jas. O'Grady, M.P., took the chair, there was a large audience, and the whole affair was a great success.

Chief speakers—The Countess of Warwick, Mrs. M. Bridges Adams,

Rev. H. J. Wilkins, H. M. Hyndman, Will Thorne, M.P., and Councillor Jack Jones, were supported by the president and secretary of the Trades Council, representatives of the B.S.S., I.L.P., Clarion Fellowship, and a number of others.

The object of the meeting was to direct attention to, and obtain support for, a Bill introduced by Will Thorne, and read in the House of Commons for a first time on March 2nd, 1906. It was drafted by the Parliamentary Committee of the T.U. Congress in accordance with instruction given at Hanley in the preceding September, and was backed by Messrs. G. N. Barnes, G. H. Roberts, J. Parker, W. Hudson, A. Henderson, W. T. Wilson, S. Walsh, and T. F. Richards.

THE BASIC PRINCIPLES

of the Bill were the right of all to a full, free education, including secondary and technical, for all who desired to avail themselves of it, and sufficient free maintenance scholarships to enable all who had fitted themselves by their previous work to continue studies at technical institutes or universities until they attain adult years.

That the State should concern itself with secular subjects only, and that children's bodies as well as minds should be developed and educated.

As the subject of education is again before the country, a perusal of this Education Bill of two dozen years ago may be worth while. It was very concise, and follows in full.

A BILL TO PROMOTE THE IMPROVE- MENT OF EDUCATION, AND THE PHYSIQUE OF CHILDREN ATTENDING ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS.

Be it enacted by the King's most excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:—

1. On and after the 1st day of January, 1907, all (Elementary) schools receiving Government grants shall be placed under the local education authority of their respective districts and boroughs.

2. The education authority shall be empowered to make such arrangements for the purchase or hiring of any denominational or privately owned school as may be mutually agreed upon, subject to the approval of the the Education Department. Failing the making of such arrangement, the local authority shall provide a new school, and within one month of the opening of the same, grants to the denominational schools shall cease.

3. The instruction in all State-aided schools shall be in secular subjects only, and no theological or denominational tests shall be applied to any of the staff or officers of the school or of the educational authority.

4. Provision shall be made by the local authorities for secondary and technical instruction for all who desire to avail themselves of it; and a sufficient number of free maintenance scholarships shall be provided by grants from the Board of Education, to enable all who have fitted themselves, by their previous work, to continue their studies at technical institutes or universities until they attain adult years.

5. Each education authority shall make suitable provision for the technical training necessary to complete the equipment of the teachers in State schools.

6. The cost of carrying out the provisions of this Bill shall be met by grants from the Imperial Exchequer, and by the restoration of educational endowments.

7. Each education authority shall provide at least one free meal a day for children attending the schools in their respective areas.

8. Each education authority shall take steps to record the height, weight, and chest measurement of children attending elementary schools; and shall furnish the first returns thereon to the Board of Education not later than December 30th, 1906.

9. Each education authority shall appoint a medical officer, or officers, whose duty it shall be to medically examine, and to treat such children as the teachers may consider in need of medical advice.

This Bill shall be cited as the "State Education Act, 1906."

The T.U. Congress, at Bath, in 1907, by 1,239,000 votes to 126,000 (10 to 1) instructed the Parliamen-

tary Committee to again formulate similar proposals in a Bill to be laid before Parliament during the forthcoming session.

Some of the points then enumerated have since been embodied in our educational system; but other principles emphasised (clauses 2 and 3 in particular of Thorne's Bill, which were repeated in the later one) seem as far off acceptance as ever—logical though they are—and the wrangles over religious education occasioned by the differences between non-provided and provided schools persist.

THE FORMATION, GROWTH, AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE LABOUR PARTY

is the outstanding event, to date, in the Socialist and Labour Movement of the twentieth century. The pioneer work of the previous twenty-five years found crystallisation in a resolution of the '99 T.U. Congress, which invited "the co-operation of all Co-operative, Socialist, Trade Union, and other working class organisations . . . in convening a special Congress . . . to devise ways and means for the securing of an increased number of Labour Members in the next Parliament."

As a result, delegates from the Congress, S.D.F., I.L.P., and Fabian Society conferred, and J. Ramsay MacDonald was asked to undertake the work of drafting a constitution for the proposed new Party.

He consented, and formulated a scheme which the delegates re-assembled to consider at a meeting in the Memorial Hall, London, on February 29th, 1900. The outcome was the Labour Party, or as it was then named

LABOUR REPRESENTATION COMMITTEE.

The I.L.P., S.D.F., Fabians, and a number of Trade Unions joined immediately, but the S.D.F., whilst recognising that in the practical everyday work in Parliament a certain "latitude" was inevitable, regarded it as imperative that the new Party should declare out and out that its object would be the realisation of Socialism. Through its delegates, James MacDonald (for many years secretary to the London Trades Council) and Harry Quelch, it proposed a resolution embodying this

view, but an amendment was moved by Keir Hardie, M.P. :

"This Congress is in favour of establishing a distinct Labour Group in Parliament, who should have their own whips and agree upon their policy, which must embrace a readiness to co-operate with any Party which, for the time being, may be engaged in promoting legislation in the direct interest of labour, and be equally ready to associate themselves with any Party opposing measures having an opposite tendency."

Thirty-eight delegates abstained from voting, and the amendment was carried by 53 votes to 39. Thus it was a decision arrived at by less than half the number of delegates assembled, and the S.D.F. considered it so unsatisfactory that it left the Party to continue an intensive and purely Socialist propaganda on its own.

The wisdom of the decision was for a long while a matter of debate amongst S.D.F.'s members, many of whom argued that the correct Marxian attitude was to line up with the definite working class movement and to educate it from inside.

THE TAFF VALE DECISION

of 1900, which made T.U. funds liable for damages in case of a strike, enormously helped the new political movement. With this, and the T.U. Congress behind it, and the earnest eloquence of the I.L.P., the L.R.C. grew rapidly. In 1906 it changed its name to

THE LABOUR PARTY,

and the only important trade union then unaffiliated was that of the miners, and this took place in 1909.

The parties were working so harmoniously in Bristol—the Trades Council, L.E.A., B.S.S., and I.L.P.—that no move was made locally to organise a L.R.C. in affiliation with the national body, but it was bound to come.

In 1905 an invitation by the Trades Council to the other bodies to discuss the question of a Parliamentary Candidate for Bristol proved the preliminary of bringing matters to a head. E. J. Burt, who was then President of the Trades Council, was appointed chairman of the Conference to which, amongst others, the following attended as representatives

of the different organisations : Milton, Senington, Freeman, Oxley, Bale, Ellery, etc. Several sittings were held over a prolonged period, and discussion was very frank.

An early difficulty was encountered over a rule of the L.R.C., that all candidates under its auspices must run as "Labour" candidates. The I.L.P. delegates made it clear that they were tied to this as the I.L.P. nationally were affiliated to the L.R.C. On the other side the Bristol Socialist Society's delegates made it equally clear that whilst they were perfectly willing to consider supporting any "Labour" nominee on his merits, they must insist upon equal and similar consideration being given to any nominee they might suggest and who might insist upon fighting with a "Socialist" as distinct from "Labour" label.

The L.E.A. delegates were disposed to accept the "fairness" of the B.S.S. attitude, but after months had been devoted to attempts at unity the B.S.S. delegates became convinced that the rest of the conference were sincerely wishful of nominating an L.R.C. candidate in Bristol East.

It was not in the nature of the Bristol Socialist Society to act as dog in the manger of the rest of the local movement, so they decided to ease matters. At the next meeting they told the remainder of the conference that they (the B.S.S.) were desirous of running a *Socialist* candidate in Bristol South, that they had a man in mind whom they would like to announce as soon as possible, and that they hoped this would not be interpreted as uncomradelike or unfriendly. Next to complete unity this suited the conference very well, as it left them free to form a L.R.C., which they eventually did with Frank Sheppard as their candidate for Bristol East, and with a united party behind them, for such help as the B.S.S. could spare and all its goodwill was readily forthcoming for Sheppard.

J. F. Green was announced by the B.S.S. with the approval of the national E.C. of the S.D.F., as prospective

SOCIALIST CANDIDATE

for Bristol South.

It amounted to an agreement to disagree and with friendship unimpaired. How good the feeling

was, was plainly expressed in 1909. Then the Social Democratic Federation held its annual conference at Bristol. It was the first time they had met in the West and under the chairmanship of Harry Jarvis, it was incidentally the largest and most successful to that date. For the first time in the history of the annual conferences of the S.D.F. a deputation from the local Trades Council attended to welcome the delegates, A. G. Cooke and Frank Sheppard doing this in the happiest of veins, and the Bristol I.L.P. also sent fraternal greetings.

Other fine examples of the spirit that maketh alive were shown in connection with J. F. Green's campaign. By the rules of the L.R.C. it was a candidature to look askance at, but Jas. O'Grady, Ben Tillett, Will Thorne, and Keir Hardie all spoke at meetings on his behalf, and he carried the whole-hearted support of all sections of the local movement.

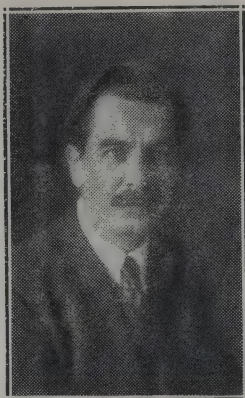
It was a tragedy that when the General Election came he was unable to go to the poll, for a vast amount of preparatory work had been accomplished, and it was a conviction of B.S.S. members that he would have polled well.

The contest in the East was well organised. It included the publication of three issues of a paper called the *East Bristol Election Labour Herald* and Sheppard polled an increased vote.

This vote was later increased to within a hundred or so of winning by Luke Bateman before the seat was eventually won for Labour by Walter Baker in 1924.

THE LOCAL L.R.C.

The local L.R.C. were not content to have the B.S.S., with its voluntary paying membership of 600, long experience, fighting traditions, and propaganda strength, outside its ranks. After the 1910 election it made further overtures, which resulted in an electoral arrangement and understanding between the two bodies. During the next year or two possible changes in the movement's line of advance became apparent, and what would have eventuated but for the war is a matter of conjecture. 1914 found all shades of the movement united in strenuous endeavours to maintain peace in



WALTER H. AYLES.
(Now Labour M.P.
for Bristol North).

Europe, but these failed, and with the outbreak of hostilities definite differences arose.

In the main, the I.L.P. consolidated on pacifism with its members as conscientious objectors, and the Labour Party supported the Government in prosecution of the war, but the British Socialist Party (in which two or three years previously the S.D.F. with several other bodies had sunk their identity in an attempt at Socialist unity) hopelessly divided into two sections. That

HIGH MOTIVES

actuated each section none will dispute, but for obvious reasons as the years of war dragged on, definite Socialist propaganda diminished, and when the armistice eventually arrived reactions were profound.

Many of those who had suffered imprisonment and social ostracism for refusing to take up arms seemed to feel so keenly the importance of pacifism and the need for peace propaganda as to almost make that and Socialism synonymous.

Of those who went and were fortunate enough to return, many had developed jagged nerves, found themselves out of work and sadly disillusioned of the one and all ideas that were supposed to operate in society in future.

The one event that saved the situation was the Labour Party's deci-

sion to leave the Government and to work independently again in the working class interest. It proved

A RALLYING POINT

for those workers whom the war had driven apart, as well as for numbers of the younger generation. For the next few years a colossal amount of zeal and enthusiasm was devoted to the completion of its organisation, and the party's declaration in favour of Socialism together with the affiliations of the Co-operative Party and the resuscitated S.D.F. inspired confidence.

ELECTORAL GROWTH.

All national and local electoral activities were suspended during the war years. Contests recommenced with Labour represented on the City Council by 1 Alderman and 8 Councillors, and at the 1919 election this was at once increased to fifteen by a gain of seven seats (Bedminster E., Bedminster W., Stapleton, St. Augustine, St. George W., St. Philip N., and St. Philip S.) in one or two cases the gains being by 'ex-service' candidates with labour sympathies.

With the exception of 1922 (when E. H. Parker won St. Paul's with a majority of 122, but two or three other seats were temporarily lost) the party representation in the Council increased every subsequent year until 1930 (in which year neither gain or loss was recorded) and now stands at 6 Aldermen and 32 Coun-

cillors, out of a total of 23 and 69 respectively; a fine achievement which presignifies further success and which has been considerably helped by the Socialist propaganda of the I.L.P. (for whom Councillor Fred Berriman has done yeoman service as secretary) and of the B.S.S. (both of whom continue their separate existence in fulfilment of their own particular missions), and by the increasing political activity of the co-operative movement. During the last five years or so (from 1926) the publication of the *Bristol Labour Weekly* has also been a valuable medium wherein, under the successive editorships of R. Neft, G. A. Jahans, and Rennie Barker, facts of municipal and national life have been recorded, together with an exposition of Labour's interpretation of the same and its policy in regard to them. But for the political and electoral organisation, the

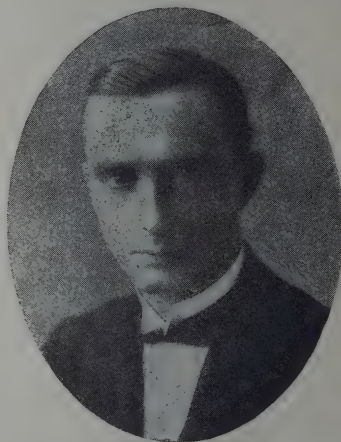
BOROUGH LABOUR PARTY

(to which the aforementioned bodies are affiliated) under the very able secretaryship of E. H. Parker is responsible.



FRED BERRIMAN.

(Secretary, Bristol I.L.P. City Councillor, Bedminster West Ward, since 1927).



E. H. PARKER.

(Secretary, Boro' Labour Party).

The Borough Party (to which Will Richmond gave many years of devoted service as assistant secretary) has also been singularly well served by competent chairmen—Walter Ayles, Fred Berriman, Ald. A. W. S.



ALD. W. H. HENNESSY.
(President, Boro' Labour Party).

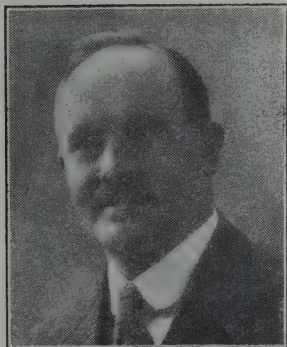
Burgess, and Ald. W. H. Hennessy.

All sections work harmoniously together in a spirit of loyal co-operation and support.

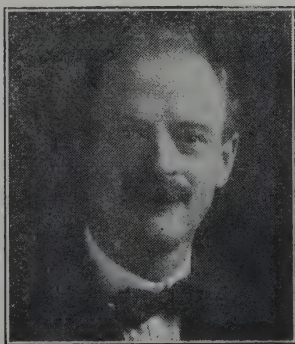
A departure of the Co-operative Society was the appointment, in 1920, of Mr. A. W. Cox, who came from Northampton, as whole time secretary of its educational side. Mr. Cox has made much headway in the spread of the co-operative ideal. He has himself been elected as a city councillor for the Easton Ward, and four other candidates from the Co-op. "panel" have also secured election, viz: Messrs. Chas. Gill, Fred Wroe, W. H. Merrick, and S. C. Light.



A. W. Cox.



CHAS. GILL.



FRED WROE.

(Three of the Co-op. Councillors).

Bristol Labour's first Parliamentary success was the return of Walter Baker and Walter Ayles for the East and North Division in 1924. At the ensuing election Bristol North was lost, but in 1929 it was regained in addition to gains in the South and Central divisions. Four-fifths of the city's parliamentary representatives now being under Labour's auspices.

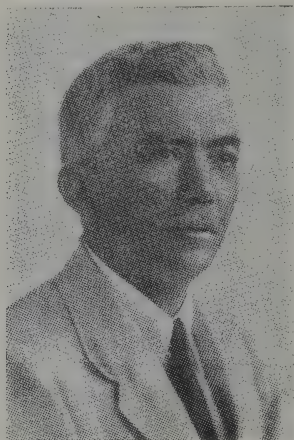
Bristol East—Sir Stafford Cripps (Solicitor-General), (returned in January, 1930, on the death of the late Labour Member, Mr. Walter Baker).

Bristol North—W. H. Ayles.

Bristol South—A. H. Walkden.

Bristol Central—J. H. Alpass.

Wisdom has not yet reached West Bristol from the East, but is on the way. Matt Giles put up a fine fight



COUNCILLOR MATT GILES.

(Old S.D.F'er. First Parliamentary Candidate, Bristol West, 1924).

there in '24, which was improved on subsequently by Lady Clare Annesley (three contests) and the new candidate, J. T. Walton Newbold, M.A. (editor of the *Social Democrat*) is confidently expected to "go one better."

LOCALLY AND NATIONALLY,

Labour is now the finest organised working class political party in history and the nearest to reach power in this country's government. Many of its ardent supporters express disappointment at its achieve-

ments so far during its present term at Westminster. This occasions the imperative necessity of an immediate revival of the educational Socialist propaganda of the early pioneers, not in order to find excuses or give reasons for omissions to deal with questions such as the provision of increased pensions and at an earlier age; or development of social services, particularly those of a nature to provide maintenance for children; and the provision of work for the unemployed in industrial and agricultural pursuits whereby they could be helped to provide their own sustenance; or national schemes of land reclamation (drainage, fertilisation, etc.); re-afforestation, and the like. Rather to emphasise that no amount of burden-shifting or improved and dexterous fiscal arrangements can solve any great social problems under present conditions.

MERE DENUNCIATION

is futile. Socialism does not "make" revolution. It gives as peaceful an outlet as possible to the revolution already forcing its way through the incrustations deposited by the previous social periods.

The position to be faced is that capitalism was a natural outcome of prior forms of production, was inevitable in the circumstances, and has been in some ways beneficial to human society (e.g., the speeding up and increasing of production and international exchange). It is itself in process of evolution. Individual capitalist concerns have already become absorbed in companies and combines, and movements are well in progress towards uniting these (in some cases with State assistance) into national units, to say nothing of the still wider demand for "Empire" units. This development will continue and may lead presently to military wars in assistance of the industrial struggles for the eventual domination of the world by one or two big combinations of countries, continents, or empires.

Meantime other significant movements forging contemporaneously ahead are the interlinking of kindred and subsidiary trades, with manufacturing and distributing depots in all parts of the world irrespective of nationalities but under a central control.

It all foretells a future in which production will be in the hands of a

comparatively few super-organisers, technicians, scientists, and financiers with world-wide scope, of which the logical outcome is an octopus-like state of bureaucracy in which the masses will depend upon the few for the means of livelihood and lead lives tantamount to slavery. To this,

SOCIALISM GIVES CHALLENGE

with an assertion that society is a social organism of which every unit has an equal right to a full, free and happy life. It claims that all achievements in the realms of science and discovery, the development of new forces and machinery, and the organisation and application of all these to the production of necessities of human life and comfort and its advancement, are the outcome of, and are only possible through life in association, *i.e.*, in human society, the body politic which lives on whilst its component individuals are born, have their being, and pass out.

From this it argues that the time has arrived when in the communal interest—the life and well-being of society itself—these social results should be controlled by the people themselves for the common good of all. It involves a complete change

in conception of the basic aim and purpose of production. In the words of H. M. Hyndman :

“ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: PSYCHOLOGIC COMPREHENSION:

These are the two essentials. . . So long, therefore, as we allow ourselves to be bemused by the formulas of money and exchange, the real phenomena of the production of wealth for use eludes our minds, and we are still tramping round in the vicious circle of profit for all. When we have grasped firmly the conception of the creation of wealth without profit, for the general advantage of all members of the community, we begin to be able to understand what the next steps in the progress of humanity upwards must be. And Socialism alone can teach us how best to take those steps.”

The early motto of the Democratic Federation still holds good :

EDUCATE—we shall need all our intelligence.

AGITATE—we shall need all our enthusiasm.

ORGANISE—we shall need all our force.



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